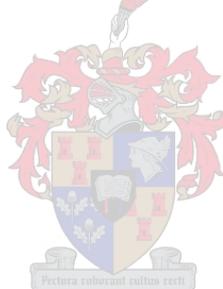


**A Road Map for Devising: In Search of Comprehensive Teaching Resources for
Secondary School Drama Teachers**

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*Thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts (Drama and Theatre Studies)
in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Stellenbosch University*



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Declaration

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Abstract

This study explores the creative collaborative strategies characteristic of South African Workshop Theatre and Devised Theatre. The motivation for this study was to create a possible roadmap that the secondary school drama teacher may consult to guide her facilitation of collaborative performance generating strategies such as: workshop, improvisation and polished improvisation as required by the South African school curriculum for Drama.

This study traces the creative collaborative strategies employed by theatre practitioners of South African Workshop Theatre. This form is an amalgamation of creative strategies utilised by theatre makers in the 1970s and 1980s to create performances that explored the dire social effects of apartheid on South African citizens. The creative collaborative strategies employed by practitioners working in this field were rooted in their own stories and experiences and the narratives of real people disempowered by the laws of apartheid.

The significance of Devised Theatre lies in its inventive, non-hierarchical and collaborative way of making theatre, which is not tethered to scripts, directors or designers. The open-ended nature of Devised Theatre challenges the drama teacher to structure the devising process in such a way that it keeps the process on track and to ensure positive participation and optimum creative collaborative output. Therefore, I structured the devising process in five stages. They are: (1) planning, designing and conceptualising; (2) research and response to stimuli; (3) discovery through creative collaborative strategies and discussion; (4) selecting, editing and polishing; and (5) finalising of design choices.

The most fundamental play making strategy of both South African Workshop Theatre and Devised Theatre is improvisation. The principles of creative, spontaneous play and positive participation that underpin improvisation are explored in relation to the possible effects this creative collaborative process has on the individual learner as well as the group. The study specifically explores the positive life-skills improvisation sanctions and how these skill, if regularly practised can be transferred to other educational practices and contexts. Life skills engendered includes positive and playful collaboration, empathy, deep thinking and whole listening.

Particular attention is paid to the role of the teacher in her capacity as facilitator to the devising process. (Hereafter the teacher will be referred to in the female form the sake of brevity.) The study relates how the principles that underpin the devising practice and improvisation as a creative collaborative process can enhance teacher practice.

This study offers a practical example of how to structure the creative collaborative, thinking and learning opportunities the devising practice offers, in the form of a Workbook for Grade 8 learners, titled, "Conservation: Devising an environmentally conscious performance piece". The design process as well as the devising strategies employed are discussed to motivate the choices made concerning experiential learning and reflection on process.

Opsomming

Hierdie tesis ondersoek die kreatiewe samewerkingstrategieë kenmerkend aan Suid-Afrikaanse Werkswinkel Teater en Skeppingsteater (“Devised Theatre”). Dit stel ten doel om ’n moontlike padkaart te ontwikkel wat die hoërskool drama onderwyser kan raadpleeg om haar fasilitering van die samewerkingstrategieë – soos vereis deur die Suid-Afrikaanse skoolkurrikulum vir Drama, naamlik: werkswinkelprosesse, improvisasie en afgeronde improvisasie – te lei.

Die tesis ondersoek die kreatiewe samewerkingstrategieë soos toegepas deur teaterpraktisyns van Suid-Afrikaanse Werkswinkel Teater. Hierdie genre is ’n amalgamasie van kreatiewe prosesse en strategieë, gebruik tydens die skep van werkswinkel produksies in die 1970s en 1980s, wat die verreikende sosiale en politieke nagevolge van apartheid blootgelê het. Die kreatiewe samewerkingstrategieë wat teaterpraktisyns in hierdie genre gebruik het, was gewortel in hul eie stories en ervarings, asook die narratiewe van Suid-Afrikaners wat gebuk gegaan het onder die ontmagtigende wette van apartheid.

Die waarde van Skeppingsteater is gegrond in vindingryke, nie-hiërargiese en samewerkende prosesse wat nie beperk word deur bestaande tekste, regisseurs of ontwerpers nie. Die nie-vasgestelde karakter van Skeppingsteater daag die drama onderwyser uit om die kreatiewe prosesse genoegsaam te struktureer om positiewe deelname en optimale samewerkingsprosesse te verseker. Gevolglik het ek die Skeppingsteater-proses in vyf fases verdeel, naamlik: (1) beplanning, ontwerp en konseptualisering; (2) navorsing en respons tot stimuli; (3) ontdekking met behulp van kreatiewe samewerkingstrategieë en bespreking; (4) keuse, redigering en afronding; en (5) finalisering van ontwerpkeuses.

Die mees fundamentele kreatiewe skeppingstrategie van beide Suid-Afrikaanse Werkswinkel Teater en Skeppingsteater is improvisasie. Die beginsels van kreatiewe spel en positiewe deelname, onderliggend aan die proses van improvisasie, word ondersoek met betrekking tot die moontlike gevolge wat die kreatiewe samewerkingsproses op die individuele leerder asook die groep kan hê. Die tesis ondersoek spesifiek die positiewe lewensvaardighede wat improvisasie kenmerk en hoe hierdie vaardighede oorgedra kan word na ander onderrigpraktyke en -kontekste. Die lewensvaardighede sluit in: positiewe en spontane samewerking, empatie, omvattende denkprosesse en luistervaardighede.

Beduidende aandag word geskenk aan die onderwyser in haar rol as fasiliteerder van die skeppingsproses. Die tesis ondersoek hoe die onderliggende beginsels van Skeppingsteater en improvisasie, as kreatiewe samewerkingsprosesse, onderrig metodiek kan verbeter.

Laastens bied die tesis ’n Werkboek wat as praktiese voorbeeld dien van die kreatiewe samewerking, denk- en leergeleenthede eie aan Samewerkingsteater-prosesse, getiteld: “Conservation: Devising an environmentally conscious performance piece”. Die ontwerp van die Werkboek, asook die Skeppingsteater-strategieë wat dit bevat, word bespreek ten einde die keuses ten opsigte van ervaringsleer en besinning oor kreatiewe prosesse te motiveer.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

There are two key performance generating strategies that the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) for Dramatic Arts (Grade 10 – 12) and Creative Arts (Grade 7 – 9) respectively requires of the drama teacher to implement in the drama classroom. The first strategy is that of workshop, only evident in the CAPS for Dramatic Arts (Grade 10 – 12) and only stipulated in the context of South African Workshop plays. The second strategy is that of improvisation which is prescribed in both CAPS.

The concern that serves as incentive for this study is my own seeming lack of knowledge, experience and skill to effectively implement and facilitate these performance strategies in the secondary school drama classroom. I will begin this chapter by defining my concern in more detail and explain how my discovery of Devised Theatre not only enriched my understanding of the creative potential and pedagogical significance inherent to workshop and improvisation as play-building strategies, but also informed my teaching praxis.

After stating the aims for this study, I will motivate why I modelled a substantial part of this study on a literary research design and methodology and how and why I employed the principles of an action research enquiry as an underpinning agency and guiding paradigm. I will then explain why I chose grounded theory as a research paradigm to support the subjective suppositions drawn from the literature reviewed and analysed and the practical application of the newly acquired knowledge.

A chapter layout will highlight the intentions and focal points of this study and a literature review, which will conclude this chapter, will substantiate the choice of research material and literature explored for the purposes of this study.

1.1 Background and rationale

South African theatre owes a great debt to the workshop methodology utilised by prominent theatre practitioners such as Barney Simon and Athol Fugard and their collaborators in the 1970s and 1980s. The plays created by these practitioners were ground-breaking due to its innately experimental character, which encapsulated a political agenda voicing the socio-political injustice practitioners experienced under the Apartheid regime in South Africa during that time. The three plays in this genre most significant for the South African drama teacher are *Woza Albert!* (workshopped by Mbongeni Ngema, Percy Mtwa in collaboration with Barney Simon) and *The Island* and *Sizwe Bansi is Dead*

(created by John Kani, Winston Ntshona in collaboration with Athol Fugard). These plays are consistently on the prescribed plays list for Grade 10 – 11 Dramatic Arts. The latter two plays garnered much attention and accolades for the actors and Athol Fugard in America and the United Kingdom. “But perhaps the most important figure here”, Temple Hauptfleisch (2007: 17) contends, “was Barney Simon at the Market, who really introduced the improvisational workshop format into South African theatre. His first seminal work of this kind, i.e. *Cincinnati, Scenes from the city life* (credited to him and his cast, 1979), led to the sensation of *Woza Albert* (1981), which he did with author/performers Mbongeni Ngema and Percy Mtwa, and such other works as *Born in the RSA* and *Black Dog/Nyemjama*”.

This style of theatre making was significant in that it gave South African performers, according to Fleischman (1991: 58), the opportunity to shrug off the control “of a single authority, the director/writer/manager, who determined what they would say and do on the stage, how they would do it, where and for whom”. Actors of all races had the opportunity to tell their stories unbridled by Western performance contexts and political sanction (and interference). In the subject, Dramatic Arts learners in Grade 10 and 11 read, analyse and write exams on these texts from an established genre defined by the CAPS as “South African Workshop Theatre” in the Grade 10 curriculum and as “Protest/Resistance theatre” in the Grade 11 curriculum. The curriculum also requires that learners immerse themselves in the performance style and methodology the practitioners who created these plays utilised as play-building strategies (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 21; 28).

Drama learners in Grade 10, for instance, are required to: “Workshop a short play as a group” (RSA Department of Education. 2011: 22). The instructions, as seen in TABLE 1.1, serve as guidelines for the drama teacher with regard to both the practical and supporting theoretical components of the intended classroom praxis. Text study and analysis go hand in glove, therefore the drama teacher will typically have learners workshop scenes or short plays based on themes from a prescribed text (three of which I mentioned above) and have learners explore performance strategies employed by the creators.

TABLE 1.1 Instructions for Grade 10 Practical Performance Task: Understand the workshop (play-building) process in the South African context.

<p>Content/concepts/skills: Understand the workshop (play-building) process in the South African context Workshop a short play as a group Theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal creation • Process of workshopping
--

- Idea
 - Research/observation (oral/written)/reflection
 - Improvisation
 - Selection
 - Polished improvisation
 - Performance
 - Recording
 - Episodic nature of workshopping
 - Dramatic and theatrical linking devices such as narrator figure, music, placards, posters, film
- Practical**
- Explore process of workshopping in order to create a performance
 - Establish personal and social discipline
 - Use improvisation to develop characters, structure and scenes
 - Script, rehearse and polish the performance
 - Develop vocal and physical communication tools for performance
 - Demonstrate both group and individual performance skills in improvisation and acting
 - Conduct ongoing self and peer assessment

(RSA Department of Education. 2011: 22)

Loren Kruger (1999) gives insight into the complexity of not only the performance strategies theatre practitioners such as Simon and Fugard employed, but also the personal and emotional significance that the collaborative creation of the mentioned plays, which she calls the “theatre of testimony”, required from their actors. In *The Drama of South Africa: Plays, Pageants, and Publics since 1910*, Kruger (1999: 147) writes:

This theatre [...] is distinguished by the dramatic interpretation of individual and collective narratives, and of politically provocative topics [...] Its presentation combines physical and verbal comedy, impersonation of multiple roles with minimal props, and direct address to the audience by performers representing themselves and their own convictions as well as those of fictional characters. Its practitioners have drawn on different models from township musicals and variety to European experiments, such as Grotowski’s ‘poor theatre’ and Brecht’s ‘social gest’.

In making this style of theatre a required topic the CAPS certainly speaks to “the core concept of drama in education” where learners are afforded the opportunities to make “personal meaning and sense of universal, abstract, social, moral, and ethical concepts through the concrete experience of the drama” (Norman in Bolton, 1985: 155). I however find the lack of specific guidelines to support theory and teacher material disconcerting. No mention is made of which specific “workshop processes” the drama teacher should implement other than “improvisation” or “polished improvisation” in order to “develop characters, structure and scenes” (see TABLE 1.1). Furthermore,

Brechtian techniques are introduced very rudimentarily in that the guidelines asks of learners to include a “narrator figure, music, placards”, which again puts the onus on the teacher to gage to which depth she wants to explore Brecht’s estrangement devises with her learners.

The theme of workshop in the South African context is carried through in Grade 11 where the curriculum requires learners to create “a short, original scene/play, highlighting environmental, educational or social issues” by utilising the performance techniques of South African workshopped plays that predated 1994 (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 28). Again, no attempt has been made to guide teacher praxis with regard to which specific improvisation techniques the drama teacher could utilise that would best serve her learners when unpacking and exploring the extreme complexities and the social relevance of the messages the prescribed plays contain. The content and themes of which certainly have the potential to expose personal truths and experiences in leaners who might have had similar experiences of racism and disempowerment, for instance. I believe this curriculum topic warrants a more thoughtful reading list to guide teacher praxis. The recommended texts/resource guidelines stipulated by the CAPS are similar for both Grade 10 and 11 – and equally vague (see TABLE 1.2).

TABLE 1.2 Recommended text/resource guidelines

Recommended texts/resources
• Dramatic Arts Grade 10 textbook/s
• Any published credible theatre history reference book
• Notes provided by teacher
• DVDs or live performances of appropriate material

(RSA Department of Education. 2011: 21; 28)

It seems clear that the onus lies on the drama teacher to flesh out the curriculum guidelines by employing prior knowledge, notes and research. I was lucky enough to have researched the life, work and workshop methodology of Barney Simon in my honours year. I therefore, initially, sincerely believed that my theoretical knowledge of his working style and philosophy would enable me to implement his techniques and strategies in my teaching practice. When I started out as a drama teacher, it became quite evident, however, that my practical application of the workshop processes of improvisation in the context of South African Workshop Theatre, lacked pedagogical depth.

I would like to give an abbreviated description of the performance generating processes and outcomes of an Integrated Practical Task¹ I designed for Grade 10 learners as an example of my brewing

¹ TABLE 1.5 gives the design criteria of what should constitute an Integrated Practical Task.

dissatisfaction with my own practice. The task required of the Grade 10 learners to create a short Protest play based on the themes generated by the prescribed text (*The Island* by John Kani, Winston Ntshona in collaboration with Athol Fugard) that we had read and analysed in class. In order to help learners create characters and narratives the task required of them to conduct interviews with a parent or a grandparent (or someone close to them) about their experiences during the apartheid years. The learners brought these ‘stories’ to class and then shared it with their groups. I also took my learners into the town centre during their drama lesson and the adjacent break time (my school was close enough so that we could walk) to do research on the streets. Learners had to observe people at a safe and respectful distance for about half an hour, watching how they walked, moved and just went about their business; these ‘people’ would then become characters on the rehearsal floor. Learners would create an imagined backstory; mimic the physicality of the individuals they had observed the previous day, etc. I based the investigative workshop processes on the strategies Barney Simon employed with his actors². Over the next week or two of lessons learners worked in groups incorporating the characters they had created into narratives and scenes.

After about another week of rehearsals, learners performed their plays. Two of the five groups created very interesting and creative short plays. The rest of the learners struggled to varying degrees. Certain individuals struggled to collaborate effectively, which hampered their groups’ creative processes. Some of the groups struggled to create plots for their plays that could give all the characters enough scope and all of them found writing the dialogue extremely frustrating. Learners who created interesting and well-drawn characters on the rehearsal floor, could simply not write dialogue driven by narrative. Even though I believed that I had ticked all the ‘workshop’ boxes, I simply did not have the necessary skills, literacy and experience to help learners engage with the collaborative creative and learning processes typical of workshop theatre, effectively. In hindsight, I believe that my own and my learners’ frustrations were due to the fact that I had absolutely no idea of the complexity of the pedagogically significant and perspective changing dramatic processes my learners were going through right under my nose. My skills as a facilitator of improvisation as a play-building strategy were especially ineffectual.

In general classroom praxis improvisation is more often than not utilised to exemplify and support dramatic and performance theory relating to a specific theatrical genre. Further Education and Training (FET) Dramatic Arts learners (Grades 10 – 12) are required to employ improvisation to

² I gleaned these techniques from interviews with actors who worked with Barney Simon as documented in *The World in an Orange: Creating Theatre with Barney Simon* (Stephanou, et al., 2005).

create scenarios, characters, structure and narratives related to specific themes or theatre styles such as Greek Theatre, Medieval Theatre or Commedia dell'Arte and South African Workshop Theatre (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 10; 20; 22; 29).

In the General Education and Training (GET) senior phase (Grades 7 – 9) learners are required to utilise improvisation as a play-building strategy in the “development of classroom performances” based on topics ranging from folk tales to environmental and social issues employing specialised performance styles such as comedy, tragedy, musical and puppet shows (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 9; 15; 16; 35; 39; 41; 43). In not a single one of the mentioned improvisation driven performance contexts do the CAPS for Creative Arts (senior phase) or Dramatic Arts give guidelines to the drama teacher as to which specific improvisation techniques or strategies she could (or should) utilise.

When I started teaching Dramatic Arts in 2011, it was obvious that I did not know enough about improvisation to teach improvisation; especially in the context of utilising improvisation as a devising strategy to create/workshop scenes and short plays. In fact, this study was partly prompted by my fascination with the devised works of South African playwrights such as Lara Foot, Andrew Buckland, Jenine Collocott and Sylvaine Strike. I was introduced to their work at the Standard Bank National Schools' Festival in Grahamstown and where I took my learners annually. I craved the skill set and knowhow to teach my learners the strategies that would equip them (and me) to devise such infinitely imaginative theatre that seemingly defied genre. I intuitively knew that I was stuck in a rut: all my ‘workshop’ or play building strategies were based on notes and research that I had accumulated on South African Workshop Theatre. Since the CAPS for the FET phase does not refer to the play-building methodology of the workshop process outside of the context of South African theatre, I never did either.

After a question and answer session at Grahamstown in 2013, in which Jenine Collocott shared the devising strategies she employed when creating *The Snow Goose* and *A Day in the Desert*, with the learners who had attended that year's Schools' Festival, I saw the light. I subsequently started to educate myself in the strategies of Devised Theatre and I realised that there was a world of strategies that I could utilise to enhance my learners' experience of play building. Why it took me so long to make the distinction between South African Workshop Theatre as a genre, and workshop as a play-building strategy, I do not know. Workshop is, simply put, a means to an end since it is only one of the play-building strategies of the devising practice. For the purpose of this study Workshop Theatre will also be defined as a creative method or process employed by performers on the rehearsal floor

(Heddon & Milling, 2006: 9).

My exploration of what Devised Theatre entails and the creative collaborative strategies it encapsulates, gave me the pedagogical insights that I so desperately needed. I find it quite unfortunate that the term Devised Theatre is never mentioned in the CAPS for the GET: either senior phase or the FET phase.

I want to list the concerns that plagued me when I started my career as a drama teacher very simply and systematically. I hope that these concerns will give credence and support to my research question and subsequent aims of this study.

- I profess the value of being an accountable educator in my field, drama and education, yet I did not know enough about improvisation in order to facilitate it effectively. I professed the values that speak to my professional ability to create a learning environment that exemplifies egalitarian standards, yet I expected learners with different skillsets and performance capabilities to create polished improvisations in groups for formal assessments, guiding their endeavours by rudimentary knowledge and intuition.
- The CAPS documents for drama subjects in both the GET (senior phase) and FET phases require of me to utilise improvisation and ‘workshop’ as play-building strategies without giving me any guidelines/ tools to assist me in differentiating between which improvisation methods and techniques would best suit the prescribed topics. I simply do not know enough about the learning and performance processes embedded in these strategies to be an effective teacher.
- I see that my instructions regarding improvisation often confuse and disconcert my learners. I see that learners fight amongst each other because there are always one or two learners who do all the work in group-work contexts. I experience the extraordinary work that learners can do when the creative collaborative processes run smoothly; I also experience the exact opposite.

Five years ago, it seemed to me that I was doing everything wrong. I was teaching at a small IEB³ school, in a small, insulated town, and I was the only drama teacher in the area. I could see how my learners were thriving due to the complexity of the drama processes they engage with on a daily basis:

³ The IEB – Independent Examinations Board – is an independent assessment body, accredited by Umalusi for school and adult assessments: the QCTO for the Foundational Learning Competence and the ETDP SETA for accredited training courses. The IEB offers external assessments in accordance with legislation and Umalusi directives for Schools registered with at Grade 12 for the National Senior Certificate (Prycision, 2015).

personally, academically and creatively – I just did not have the experience, knowledge or literacy to prove WHY.

I would like to bring to mind the complexity of the role of the drama teacher in the South African, IEB context. This is indeed a positive factor, since the more challenging and complex the role of the teacher, the more rewarding and professionally satisfying the praxis.

The drama teacher is responsible for sourcing and designing the learning and teaching material that support classroom praxis. When designing the learning and teaching material she must consider quite a number of strategies and procedures in order to reach the required curriculum goals.

In order to illustrate the tension that exists between the extremely rudimentary curriculum guidelines and actual teacher praxis I present below – see TABLE 1.3 – the actual curriculum guidelines of a prescribed topic, South African theatre in which the CAPS for FET phase requires of learners to create a workshopped performance (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 28). Next to the actual guidelines, I present a possible example, or broad outline, of considerations pertaining to the planning phase for a performance task based on this topic.

TABLE 1.3 Curriculum Guidelines vs. Actual teacher praxis

Curriculum Guidelines	Actual Praxis: Broad Outline
<p>Topic 4: South African theatre</p> <p>Content/concepts/skills: Understand the hybrid nature of South African theatre Analyse the specific functions that theatre serves in society Perform a workshopped scene, based on an issue of concern</p> <p>Theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An overview of South African theatre up to 1994, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The diverse traditions, identities and heritages in the development of indigenous and imported theatre styles - South African theatre spaces (traditional, western, township, state-controlled, festivals) and how these contributed to the kind of work produced 	<p>Topic 4: South African theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The drama teacher has to consider the explicit and implicit themes as relating to the prescribed Topic. If the Topic requires learners to creating a short play dealing with a specific concerns, the drama teacher must keep in mind how the explicit themes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protest/Resistance theatre - Community Theatre - Workers' Theatre - Educational Theatre - Theatre for Conservation - Theatre for Reconciliation - Satirical Revue relates to the implicit socio-political driven themes and/ or issues that underpin all the specific agendas' guidelines learners are required to

<p>- Workshopping as a process of theatre making that suited specific South African conditions (revise from Grade 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● South African theatre with a specific agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protest/Resistance theatre - Community theatre - Workers' theatre - Educational theatre - Theatre for Conservation - Theatre for Reconciliation - Satirical Revue <p>Practical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research a form of South African theatre with a specific agenda and present research in the form of a poster, essay, radio programme or TV documentary ● Develop group dynamics for workshopped theatre ● Prepare a short, original scene/play, highlighting environmental, educational or social issues, using workshopped techniques ● Consider and follow the production process (inclusive of all stages, including marketing to an audience) to bring this original scene/play to performance 	<p>assimilate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● These agendas were and still are first and foremost driven by the lived experiences of real people, everyday South Africans. I for one certainly believe that it is the stories, the lived experience and the circumstances that should drive the workshop, and not the form or style of theatre. ● During the research and design phase of the Integrated Practical Task the teacher must carefully consider which devising strategies and how she wants to employ it so that the learners' age, potential skills sets and experience are served; consider the allocated time for the research and performance components of the task, the writing and rehearsal phases; decide where the performance should take place, taking technical and practical issues that may result into consideration ● During this phase the teacher must decide what format the Integrated Practical Task or Workbook should take in order support the dramatic processes of workshop and reflection. ● The Integrated Performance Task or Workbook must contain assessment tools and guidelines which will help the learners to set group, individual and performance goals. ● During the rehearsal and implementation phase the drama teacher will facilitate the range of devising strategies included in the Integrated Performance Task/ Workbook. ● The teacher must make sure to include scaffolded questions that will enable her learners to reflect on their creative, collaborative and embodied learning processes throughout the creative journey.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● During the workshop phase, where learners work together in their groups, the drama teacher takes on the role of a collaborator or co-deviser; then slowly but surely she becomes an objective observer. ● Learners need to ‘direct’ themselves for ultimately they are the ones to be assessed on their process as well as their performance; the teacher may only make suggestions – along the way.
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My concerns as elaborated above can be distilled into one question, which I offer as my main research question.

1.2 Main research question

How does a drama teacher, especially a novice teacher, negotiate the glaring discrepancy between WHAT she should do according to the CAPS for Drama, especially when she utilises workshop and improvisation as play-building strategies, and HOW she should do it, in order to adhere to the aims of The National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12 (see TABLE 1.6)?

1.3 Aims of the study

The overarching aim of this study is that I want to equip myself with knowledge that will enable me to become an effective facilitator of the creative collaborative processes underpinning the devising strategies of improvisation and workshop. The core research, which will serve the overarching aim of this study, will entail the comprehensive exploration of the creative strategies and methods utilised and advocated by scholars and eminent theatre practitioners in the field of South African Workshop Theatre, Devised Theatre and Theatrical Improvisation. The study will specifically relate to the acquired knowledge through the lens of the educational values and skills these performance modes may engender as specified by the Aims of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 (see TABLE 1.6) as well as the Aims of drama in Creative Arts (GET: senior phase) (see TABLE 1.7).

The reading and analysis of existing literature will firstly give me a much more comprehensive and reassuring understanding of WHAT the CAPS actually requires me to do. Secondly I believe that the newly acquired knowledge and pedagogical insight, gained from the research, should help me to bridge that gap that exists between WHAT I am doing and HOW I should be doing it.

For the purpose of this study, the acquired theory will therefore be distilled and then applied in creating learner and teacher Devised Theatre resource documents. The most important aim of the inclusion of these resource documents in the study is to give evidence of the potential practical application of the newly acquired theory. The secondary aim of the teacher and learner resource documents is to offer possible templates for the future design and scaffolding of similar resources in order to ensure that the Devised Theatre resource document serve the process as well as the final product in adherence to the curriculum requirements. Thus, the study will comment on the motivations and feasibility of the choice of improvisation activities, learner reflection as well as script writing activities comprised in the resource documents.

1.4 Research design and methodology

The study will employ the research designs and methodologies relating to literature and action research. These designs and methodologies will be underpinned by the tenets of grounded theory.

1.4.1 Literature study

The first phase of this study will be a literature study. This will encompass the exploration and deductive analysis of existing literature on South African Workshop Theatre, Devised Theatre and Theatrical Improvisation. There are three key stimuli that motivated the choice of literature study as the framework on which this study rests. Firstly, as a drama teacher I am required by the curricula to be a skilled teacher and facilitator of theatrical modes pertaining to South African Workshop Theatre and Theatrical Improvisation, to equip my learners for formal assessment procedures. The second motivational factor is directly related to my inadequate knowledge of the theory and methodology that govern these performance modes. The third motivational factor is based on my personal assumption that these modes of practice hold significant perspective changing pedagogical potential for all participants involved, including the teacher. My investigation into Devised Theatre practice serves specifically as an extension to the existing literature on the performance modes of workshop and improvisation outside of the South African Theatre context.

A literature based research enquiry requires of the researcher to review the works of pertinent scholars and “representative research” in his/her chosen field of enquiry and by way of summarising, logical deduction and creative analysis to sort and define the literature relevant to the aims of the proposed study (Lin, 2009). The literature review I offer in section 1.8 of this chapter will inform and validate the authority of the literature explored for the purpose of this study.

1.4.2 Action research

In the second phase of this study I will endeavour to marry my newly acquired knowledge with the curriculum requirements and outcomes in the three performance modes on which this study will focus. I will endeavour to find a solution to a personal “educational problem” which Creswell (2012: 576) suggests to be the starting point of an action enquiry. The second phase of the study will therefore be modelled on an action research design and methodology. Whilst sifting through, sorting and analysing the existing literature on the three modes of performance practice, i.e. South African Workshop Theatre, Devised Theatre and Theatrical Improvisation, over the past two years, I could simultaneously test my findings and ideas. Experimentation by means of group improvisation and workshops resulted in experimentation with learner resource packs that would guide learners and classroom practice in this regard. Thus, the first phase of this study is in fact inextricably linked with the questions that all action researchers should ask themselves according to McNiff and Whitehead (2006: 11), which are:

- What am I doing?
- How do I describe and explain my actions to you?
- How do I hold myself accountable to myself and to you?

In order to improve teacher practice, action research scholars suggest that the teacher considers her own values and that these values should form the starting point of her action research enquiry (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006: 101). My values on which I base my professional growth and practice as a teacher are set out in TABLE 1.4 below.

TABLE 1.4 My professional values as teacher

- | |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be a progressive teacher who engenders a positive attitude towards dramatic processes. 2. To advocate egalitarian standards and values. 3. To create an interesting and challenging learning environment, rife with creative opportunities. 4. To surprise learners with their own creativity. 5. To be a specialist in my field; which in turn would engender the trust and enthusiasm of my learners. 6. To be accountable, adaptable and supportive. |
|--|

Kemmis et al. (2014: 6) elaborate on the character of the teacher as action researcher when they note that research should be active, proactive and self-reflective – in fact they go so far as to postulate that action researchers are “profoundly interested in their practices, in whether they understand their

practices and the consequences of their practices, and in whether the conditions under which they practice are appropriate”. These guiding principles of action research speaks to my own deep interest in the pedagogical values embedded in the dramatic processes of the subject Drama and to my professional values as teacher as stipulated in TABLE 1.4.

In section 1.1 of this chapter I have systematically reflected on the concerns that plagued me when I started my career as a drama teacher. It is my reading of McNiff and Whitehead that enabled me to put my concerns on paper for the first time. These scholars encourage potential action researchers to consider their concerns when reflecting on the feasibility of their proposed enquiry in a very simplistic manner, and then to make a plan to rectify the problem. The suggested questions, which made me realise that I want to model my research design on an action inquiry, are:

- What is my concern?
- Why am I concerned?
- What experiences can I describe to show why I am concerned?
- What can I do about it? What will I do about it? (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006: 3; 79)

These questions coupled with the vagueness of the Recommended text/resource guidelines of the CAPS for the FET phase (see TABLE 1.2) incentivised me to come up with my own teacher and learner resources, seeped in existing theory, that would help me assuage my concerns. The teacher and learner resources (see Appendix A & B) are part of a ‘road map’ that this study has manifested into and which I offer as a possible action plan to bridge the gap between WHAT I am doing, WHAT I should be doing and HOW I should be doing it, in the context of improvisation and workshop as play-building strategies.

A simple dictionary definition for the noun ‘road map’ (Definition of Road Map, 2016) reads as follows:

- a map that shows the roads in a particular area
- a plan or road map for achieving a goal.

I would like to emphasise two of the many factors that give credence to action research in an educational context that relates to this study specifically, namely that action research “encourages educators to reflect on their practices” and that it “promotes a process of testing new ideas” (Mills in Creswell, 2012). In many respects it was the curriculum that compelled me to come up with “new ideas” to support my teacher praxis, and in doing so, a wealth of new knowledge presented itself to

me.

The knowledge acquired during the first phase of the study will be refined, applied, tested and explored in practice by means of carefully designed and scaffolded Devised Theatre Integrated Performance Tasks for Grade 8 drama learners (see Appendix A & B) in compliance with the National Curriculum Policy and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement for Creative Arts (Grade 7 – 9). The design of the Integrated Performance Task/ Workbook will be based on the criteria for the Integrated Practical Task in the Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAGS) for Grade 12 Dramatic Arts learners for the IEB – see TABLE 1.5.

TABLE 1.5 Integrated Practical Task: Criteria

- The integrated practical tasks will focus on a practical product, but will comprise an integrated written component as well.
- The integrated performance tasks are made up of two components: written reflection and/or evaluation, and a practical product.
- The written reflection and evaluation could comprise of research, planning and any other record keeping required to prepare for, and present, a practical product in Dramatic Arts.
- Rubrics by themselves are not sufficient to prove the authenticity of practical tasks.
- Rigorous evidence needs to be provided, such as constructive written feedback.
- If the practical product is a performance, the performance piece showing clear evidence of process (script, editing, use of voice, blocking and staging, characterisation, research, and etcetera) must be submitted.
- If an alternative practical product is conducted (directing, designing, lighting, choreography, set-building, costume-making, radio play, make-up, etcetera) clear evidence of process and product must be provided in the form of photos, recordings, comments, self-reflection/evaluation, worksheets and journal keeping.
- All assessment task sheets must contain the instruction for the task, the time allocation for the task, the criteria for the assessment, rubrics and the way the final mark will be calculated.

(National Senior Certificate Handbook Implementation: Grade 12, 2104: 4)

The Integrated Performance Task in question will require of learners to devise a short play exploring environmental issues. The Integrated Performance Task was published as a Workbook (see Appendix A). This Workbook was generated to run for one school term culminating in a performance at the end of Term 3, 2016. The concept of the Workbook was inspired by and based on the scaffolded design and criteria for the Externally Set Integrated Task (ESIT) for Grade 12 learners of 2013 and 2014 (see Appendix C).

In the final chapter of this study, the efficacy of a Workbook as a teaching resource will be explored in relation to the following action:

- The proposed study will examine the motivation for the inclusion of specific dramatic processes and improvisation techniques.
- The proposed study will also unpack the practicality of the learning material included in the Workbook.

I will also relate my choices of learning material and the implementation thereof to the overarching Aims of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12 (see TABLE 1.6), as well as the Aims of drama in Creative Arts (GET: senior phase) (see TABLE 1.7) in order to prove my accountability.

Quite a number of considerations influenced the decision making process with regards to the delineation of the age group and the choice of themes for the Integrated Performance Tasks generated for the purpose of this study.

The drama teacher has to make provision for extremely complex learning outcomes when creating learning and teaching materials that sets very high personal, creative, social and academic targets for the learners. Furthermore, these learning outcomes have to be compliant to and measured against the General Aims of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12 (see TABLE 1.6) and the Specific Aims of Drama in the Senior Phase of the GET (or General Education and Training) Phase (see TABLE 1.7)

TABLE 1.6 Overarching aims of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12

<p>The National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12 aims to produce learners that are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking; • work effectively as individuals and with others as members of a team; • organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively; • collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information; • communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes; • use science and technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others; and demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

(RSA Department of Education, 2011: 5)

TABLE 1.7 Aims of drama in Creative Arts GET (senior phase)

<p>Drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study of drama in Creative Arts gives learners tools to represent human experiences in dramatic form, through processes of participation, collaboration, exploration and presentation.

- Drama encourages the creative exploration of themes and issues, creates a safe context for this exploration, and provides opportunities to reflect on the insights gained in the process.
- Learners appreciate and interpret a wide range of dramatic works both published and created in the class.
- An important aspect of drama is the development of classroom performances (through improvisation/playmaking processes) based on a specific stimulus.
- In drama, the learner explores the motivation and the relationships between people in a real, imagined or historical context, to help him or her understand the world.
- • The learner is encouraged to make decisions and to take responsibility for those decisions within the safe context of the drama.

Source adapted from: (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 8 - 9)

The challenge that the effective implementation of the CAPS requirements for Grade 8 Drama present with regards to time management was another deciding factor. The contact time allocated by the CAPS allows for only ± 2 hours of instructional time per week, per learner (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 7). This presents immense challenges for the drama teacher who wants to create teaching and learning material with the pedagogical depth and scope required by the General Aims of the National Curriculum, as well as the Specific Aims for Drama in the GET: senior phase. Therefore, the proposed study will certainly aim to provide reasonable reflection on why and how classroom praxis may benefit from the effective and thoughtful sourcing, designing and scaffolding of learning and teaching material to optimise the quality of the limited teacher learner contact opportunities allocated for Drama by the CAPS for Creative Arts Grades 7 – 9.

The third guiding factor is that of the acquisition and transference of skills from one education and training phase to the next. The CAPS states that the skills acquired in the drama class in the GET: senior phase should be transferable and relatable to the skills required of and honed in the Dramatic Arts learner in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 8).

It is therefore no coincidence that the Workbook generated for the purpose of this study is based on the design and principles of the ESIT for Grade 12 learners (see Appendix C & D) as stated above. The choice to use this task as template not only speaks to the educational values and skills the National Curriculum for Drama requires of drama teachers to implement; it also speaks to my personal values and beliefs as a drama teacher.

The choice of the specific curriculum topic to base the example resource on is linked to the performance modes of South African Workshop Theatre, Devised Theatre and Theatrical Improvisation which requires of learners to create a written sketch or polished improvisation to reflect

a social or environmental issue (see TABLE 1.8). This topic introduces learners to the skill of creating plays with a specific agenda, which they hone and extend in Grade 11 drama, since the CAPS for the FET phase requires of learners to workshop plays based on a specific agenda in the context of South African Theatre (see TABLE 1.3).

TABLE 1.8 Create a written sketch of polished improvisation to reflect a social or environmental issue

<p>Topic 2</p> <p>Written sketch or polished improvisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme(s) related to a social or environmental issue for the drama • Isolating and developing a topic from the research • Structure of the performance • Shape and focus of the performance • Specialised style, e.g. melodrama, comedy, tragedy, farce, musical and puppet show. • Technical resources to enhance the performance

(RSA Department of Education, 2011:15)

I strongly believe that the sounder you lay the skills foundation for learners relating to dramatic processes in Grade 8, the sounder the academic, creative and personal growth drama learners will experience throughout their school career. I am of the belief that if Grade 12 Dramatic Arts learners in the IEB are expected to create devised plays as part of a nationally set performance exam (see Appendix C as an example), Grade 8 drama learners should be provided with the learning experiences in the GET: senior phase that will guide and aid them to excel in the FET phase.

A key characteristic of the processes of an action research design and methodology is an enquiry conducted in participation with other participants in order to share understanding, commitment and to increase “the motivation for collective and collaborative action” (Dick, 2003: 2). In the case of my proposed study, I will be relying on my fellow drama teacher and Department Head, Jhanie van Aswegen, who will be participating in every aspect of the planning, implementation and reflection phases of the Grade 8 Workbook designed for this study. My hope is that the quality of the included activities in the resource coupled by my increased abilities as facilitator (underpinned by my investigation into the learning processes inherent to the performance modes of workshop and improvisation) will enhance and enrich classroom praxis. “Giving meaning to a learning situation”, Lombofsky writes, “motivates the students and encourages an emotional investment in driving the activity and the behaviour” (2014: 182).

The learners' experience of every aspect of the dramatic processes they engage with during the devising activities included in the resource certainly will instruct and inform the immediate facilitation as well as the reimagining of future teacher and learner resources.

It is therefore accepted that the instructional material and facilitation devices will change and grow through the observance of the cyclical process known as "action-reflection" (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006: 3) which the proposed study needs to employ in order to attain and sustain credibility. The action enquiry is known for a cyclical character, since the research, application and reflection phases are processes that feed off each other, and is therefore an ongoing process. As McNiff and Whitehead (2006: 9) point out, as soon as the process reach a "provisional point" [...] the point itself raises new questions".

The drama teacher as facilitator is in the unique position to employ action research in the moment; when she observes, analyses, synthesizes and readjusts (when necessary) the theory and practice employed in the drama classroom, she is applying "self-study" which places her in the centre of their her own enquiry (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006: 11). However, I believe that without the acquired knowledge that the first phase of this study affords me, my attempts at self-study would be empty and lacking a sound theoretical foundation.

1.4.3 Grounded theory

The study proposes to utilise the tenets of grounded theory as means to support, focus and guide the processes of the action research phase. Especially as Dick (2003) notes, "that there are relatively few descriptions in the Action research literature which reveal exactly how a theory is developed" (2003:6).

The principles of grounded theory speaks to the "emergent methodology" of the action design; in fact, the principles of both shows "some important similarities", therefore a symbiosis of these two designs can only enhance the research procedures (Dick, 2003: 1; 6). Creswell, in his deliberation on grounded theory design and methodology, focuses on the fact that it is a "process theory that explains an educational process of events, activities, actions, and interactions that occur over time" (Creswell, 2012: 423).

Grounded theory presupposes not only a systematic approach to data analysis, which gives "direction" to the researcher, it is also "self-correcting", allowing the researcher to stay close to the data "at all times in the analysis" (Creswell, 2012: 423). This aspect of grounded theory supports the

self-correcting nature of the devising practice and the facilitation of the dramatic processes. It entails: the drama teacher has to constantly rethink and re-imagine ways and means – often on the spot – to enhance the devising strategies and facilitation processes in order for learners to get the most out of each stage of the devising process.

Most importantly, in consideration to the proposed study, grounded theory allows for the constructivist approach to research procedures; it allows the researcher to focus on “sociological concepts” (Charmaz in Creswell), when gathering and considering data, that encompasses her personal views, values, beliefs, feelings, assumptions, experiences and ideologies of all the role players connected to the study (Creswell, 2012: 429 - 430). The process driven literature study, analysis and application of the performance theory and modes of workshop in the context of South African theatre, Devised Theatre and Theatrical Improvisations have been carried out through the lens of the pedagogical implications related to the specific and general curriculum aims. The study and analysis of the literature is therefore ultimately subjective.

I find the personal and reflective mode of expression with regards to grounded theory research procedures specifically attractive. Since this style of enquiry allows me to write about my own values, feelings and assumptions – it thus validates the importance of personal and professional values in the context of educational research. An important distinction between the action enquiry and grounded theory methods is that in the latter context, the researcher tends to be an observer of a process in order to establish a theory to explain the process. The action researcher try to establish a theory based on her own experience of the process that they are immersed in that will influence future action (Creswell, 2012: 422; Kemmis, 1994: 46). I believe the objective approach to generating theory, pertaining to grounded theory, will serve to ‘ground’ my subjective responses to the literature explored, analysed and applied.

This study therefore aims to rely on the grounded theory model (see TABLE 1.9) to guide the literature study component of this thesis and the interrelated action research component that “addresses the process” of classroom praxis pertaining to improvisation and workshop in the secondary school context.

TABLE 1.9 A Process and Categories within the Flow of Research in Grounded Theory

<p>The research problem leads to</p> <p>↓</p> <p>A study of a central phenomenon in grounded theory research questions</p>
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↓
That addresses a process

↓
Which contains

- a sequence of activities
- including actions by people
- including interactions by people

↓
Which a grounded theorist begins to understand by

- developing categories
- relating categories
- developing a theory that explains

(Creswell, 2012: 432)

The study aims to incorporate qualitative data collecting strategies utilised by grounded theorists that will include “observations, conversations, interviews, public records [...] and the researcher’s own personal reflections” (Charmaz in Creswell, 2012: 432). Four activities, specific to grounded theory research methodology, i.e. data-collection, note taking, coding and memoing will be carried out simultaneously as Dick (2003:5) notes.

Observation will certainly be a key data collecting and analysing device. The teacher in the role of researcher has to be willing to adapt and challenge her own preconceptions, moving from ‘outsider’, and then “participating in the setting and observing as an ‘insider’” and back depending on the needs of the learners in the creative process (Creswell, 2012: 213).

Creswell’s observation ties in with the idea of critical reflection, which is a prolific component of the devising practice. Alison Oddey (1996: 26) points out that the devising practice leaves no room for contrived actions and modes of thinking, learning and doing: “The devising process needs to be searching, the work constantly sifted, re-examined, and criticised. Group analysis is required, which ultimately leads back to self-examination and self-criticism”.

Given the above characteristics of grounded theory and the fact that “grounded theory exhibits the rigor quantitative researchers like to see in an educational study” it should support and exhibit the authenticity of my actions as teacher-researcher in the devising context (Creswell, 2012: 422).

1.5 Theoretical framework

This study aims to utilise the theory, philosophy and participatory theatrical techniques advocated by Keith Johnstone and Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*. The techniques and philosophy of these practitioners will form the basis of the practical exploration and experimentation with regards to performance strategies and methods that informs the creation of script and character by way of experimental improvisation.

I decided on the work of Augusto Boal for quite a number of reasons. Firstly, his philosophy and theories on theatre and performance speak to the democratic and egalitarian nature of the creative processes of “collective decision-making and skills-sharing” inherent to Devised Theatre (Oddey, 1994: 8; Govan et al. 2007: 47). His methods are non-didactic, but pedagogic, since he advocates that the theatre could be utilised as a form of collective learning (Boal, 1995: 7). Secondly, Boal's techniques and exercises for actors and non-actors, are extremely user-friendly, and uniquely suitable for adaption to a secondary school context. In my reading of his work I could draw many parallels to the socially conscious philosophy and intentions of South African theatre practitioners of the 1970s and 1980s, like Fugard, in order to give “voice to the voiceless” (Walder, 1993: 356).

I found the underpinning philosophy of Keith Johnstone's work to be specifically important and inspiring. His teachings advocate fun, experimentation, personal accountability and adaptability. His dictum, and I paraphrase, that it is okay to make mistakes, certainly assists the drama teacher in creating a carefree and cheerful classroom environment where nothing is impossible (Johnstone, 1999: 62).

The underpinning tenets of the philosophy of constructivism when applied in an educational context speaks to the learner-centred, creative collaborative practice inherent to Devised Theatre. This philosophy underpins the aims of the overarching National Curriculum for Grade R – 12 (see TABLE 1.6), as well as the aims of Drama in Creative Arts GET (senior phase) (see TABLE 1.7) and will serve as the lens through which this study aims to explore the research, creative methods and pedagogical processes teachers and learners are exposed to in the context of workshopping and improvisation for devising.

Bonk and Cunningham (1998: 27) distinguish between the foci of Cognitive and Social Constructivist theory in their book, *Searching for Learner Centred, Constructivist and Sociocultural Learning Tools*. The governing principles that influence the teacher's approach to classroom practice are bulleted for the sake of clarity:

Cognitive constructivists focus on:

- making learning more relevant, building on student prior knowledge;
- posing contradictions; and
- addressing misconceptions.

Social constructivists emphasize:

- human dialogue;
- interaction;
- negotiation; and
- collaboration.

The devising practice certainly relates to the dynamic, learner-centred acquisition of knowledge characteristic of constructivism in education. It also speaks to the social and collaborative perspective on the acquisition of knowledge associated with Vygotsky, “considered to be the father of social constructivism,” as well as the perspective on the cognitive construction of knowledge by Piaget who “is often classified as a father of personal (or cognitive) constructivism” (Sjøberg, 2010: 8). It is a widely accepted assumption that “Piaget acknowledged to have been inspired by Vygotsky's ideas” (Pass in Sjøberg, 2010: 8). The design of the Workbook will be underpinned by both these scholars’ theories.

This study cannot but focus on the ways and means the dramatic processes of devising require of and incite learners to construct their own knowledge; from a social and collaborative position, as well as a personal (and cognitive) position. The learners’ own life experiences, knowledge and ideas are central to the creative processes of Devised Theatre since it offers, as Oddey (1996: 1) points out, a platform for learners to “make sense of themselves within their own cultural and social context”. In fact, she argues that learners are encouraged to investigate, integrate and transform “their personal experiences” when they devise (Oddey, 1996: 1). The very nature of dramatic processes, Roa (2008) writes, such as role-play, improvisation and group performances, not only asks learners to discuss and contemplate, but also “actively explore” their “critical and compassionate imagination” via role-play, improvisation and group performances”. The active exploration of themes, social issues and personal understanding within the creative collaborative practice of devising, more often than not, do not require the input of a teacher. The learners grow in understanding, as a group and as individuals throughout the devising process; they are ultimately in control of the final, creative product.

It is certainly encouraging for the purpose of this study that “the constructivist approach to education

[...] underpins the South African curriculum” as Moonsamy (2014: 51) points out. Unfortunately, there is truth to Bonk and Cunningham’s suggestion (1998: 27) that “practicing educators may not have been provided (...) with the wherewithal to reconstitute and embed constructivist ideas within their personal philosophies and teaching practices”. When I started researching this theoretical paradigm, it became evident that my teaching practice had in fact evolved into the learner-centred approach advocated by constructivist theory. However, it had taken me at least two years to move away from the teacher centred or more traditional model of instruction, because of my own insecurities and lack of experience as a drama teacher. I will certainly explore this phenomenon in greater detail in order to give possible solution to this practical dilemma.

Devised Theatre is primarily a creative collaborative practice. One of the key outcomes of this practice in an educational context should certainly be the internalization of the art of negotiation and collaboration. *Internalization*, one of the key principles of social constructivist theory can be defined as “the process of taking new information that was experienced or learned within a social context and developing the necessary skills or intellectual functions to independently apply the new knowledge and strategies” (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998: 35).

The process of internalization is influenced by key socio-cultural principles: Mediation; the consideration of the Zone of Proximal Development; Assisted Learning; Scaffolded Learning; Intersubjectivity; Activity Setting as Unit of Analysis; and Distributed Intelligence in a Learning Community (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998).

The design of the Grade 8 Workbook certainly attempted to employ the above principles as supportive tenets in order to enable the necessary internalization and the resulting cognitive realisation of each individual learner.

This study proposes to apply and investigate how the use of Assisted Learning tools such “modelling, coaching, scaffolding and fading, questioning, directly instructing, task structuring, management and feedback, and pushing learners to explore, reflect, and articulate ideas” will enhance classroom praxis during the implementation of the Grade 8 Workbook (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998: 36).

1.6 Chapter layout

1.6.1 Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter is a systematic explanation of the background and rationale that determined my research question and the resulting aims of the study. This chapter also comprises a description of my research

topic, as well as the research design and methodology I utilised as paradigm to explore, analyse and guide my conclusions. This chapter relates the theoretical principles that underpinned my research procedures.

1.6.2 Chapter 2: Exploring workshop in the context of South African Workshop Theatre

This chapter will explore the workshop techniques South African theatre makers employed during the 1970s and early 1980s that gave this genre its name. South African Workshop Theatre has had an immense impact on the theatrical landscape of this country. The plays conceived during the apartheid years to offer resistance, protest and testimony to the injustice of the apartheid regime are still studied at schools and performed regularly on South African stages. The chapter will reflect on the following:

- the significance of this form in terms of drama and education
- why utilising only workshop techniques unique to South African Theatre other than improvisation, might inhibit creativity.

1.6.3 Chapter 3: Exploring Devised Theatre

In this chapter I will explore Devised Theatre practice. I will relate this discussion to the educational relevance of incorporating devising strategies into my teaching practice.

1.6.4 Chapter 4: Improvisation as a devising strategy in the classroom

In this chapter I will explore the educational relevance and the creative processes of improvisation as a devising strategy.

1.6.5 Chapter 5: The role of the teacher as facilitator of the creative collaborative learning

The focus of this chapter is on the role of the teacher in the context of the practice of workshop and improvisation in Devised Theatre. I will explore guiding principles that could possibly aid classroom praxis in relation to the fluidity and adaptability of the teacher's role in the classroom through the lens of constructivist theory.

1.6.6 Chapter 6: Orientation to the workbook

In this chapter the focus will be on the Workbook (see Appendix A) I designed as teacher/ learner resource in accordance with the CAPS for GET: senior phase. I will explain why I included specific

devising strategies in relation to the desired performance outcomes; I will also elucidate the pedagogical significance of the chosen strategies. I will relate how my research guided my choices. I will also unpack the accompanying Facilitator's Workbook (see Appendix B) which will contain detailed guidance for the drama teacher. Finally, I will reflect on the way forward based on: the notes Jhanie van Aswegen made on the accessibility and user-friendliness of the Facilitator's Workbook during implementation, as well as my own reflections on the success of the Workbook in general.

1.6.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I will relate the most significant conclusions drawn based on my exploration of the selected literature reviewed for this study. I will add suggestions for further research, linked to my preliminary reading and research embedded in the preceding chapters.

1.7 Literature review

I include this literature review in order to validate and justify the choice of literature explored and investigated which serves as the foundation of this study and, in turn, underpins the action research phase of the study.

This study aim to unpack, investigate (in practice) and synthesise the “devising strategies” as described in the following published works on the subject, namely, *Making a Performance: Devising Histories and Contemporary Practices* by Govan, et al (2007), *Devising Performance: A Critical History* by Heddon & Milling (2006) as well as the “the first book published with an explicit focus on the subject, Alison Oddey's *Devising Theatre: A Practical and Theoretical Handbook (1994)*” (Govan, et al., 2007: 4).

This study aims to make sense of the pedagogical potential of the use of Devised Theatre strategies in the drama classroom (in the South African context). Therefore classroom praxis in this context, needs to be viewed through the lens of the existing critical thinking and learning, creative and collaborative values, outcomes and practice inherent to Drama in education. At the moment the description of classroom praxis in the CAPS is quite thin (in comparison to the above description) and based on traditional South African workshop methods. Marks Fleishman's Master's Thesis, titled *Workshop Theatre in South Africa in the 1980s: A Critical Examination with specific reference to Power, Orality and the Carnavalesque* (1991) will serve as the platform for the exploration of South African Workshop Theatre.

As previously stated, Workshop Theatre will also be defined as a creative method or process

employed by performers on the rehearsal floor (Heddon & Milling, 2006: 9). According to Oddey (1996: 12) workshop is one of the processes devising companies employ when creating a performance piece, which may include “methods of research, discussion, 'workshopping' material, improvisation, the use of a writer, or visual experimentation”. Since South African Workshop Theatre has historical significance in the context of South African theatre, the study will unpack the processes and techniques employed by theatre practitioners who worked in this style during the 1970s and 1980s. The writing and reflection of this form in the South African context of Loren Kruger, Mark Fleischman, Ian Steadman and Temple Hauptfleisch informed this section of the study. The study will also reflect on the significance of this form in terms of Drama and education and why employing this term as the only mode for creative collaborative play-building practice in the Drama curriculum for Grade 10 – 12 might be outdated.

In order for the drama teacher to successfully navigate and synthesise devising strategies in the classroom he or she cannot but look “inward”. Ultimately, the teacher becomes the facilitator of the praxis, but in order to design learning and teaching material that informs the creative collaborative process that is devising, optimally, the teacher must be able to critically reflect on his or her beliefs with regards to the pedagogical value of drama in education and his or her subject knowledge. Towards this end, quite a number of relevant chapters in *Schools and Thinking Communities* edited by Lena Green and Janet Condy (2014) were reviewed.

Gavin Bolton’s article titled *Changes in Thinking about Drama in Education* that supports the notion of a *thinking* teacher introduced me to the legacy of Dorothy Heathcote; “*Master*” versus “*Servant*”: *Contradictions in Drama and Theatre Education* by Shifra Schonmann spoke to my inherent belief in the pedagogical value that the aesthetics principles of theatre hold for Drama in education. Schonmann also introduced me to the thought provoking and informative article by Jonathan Levy, titled “Theatre and Moral Education” which focusses on how Drama in education guide and inform learners to make “personal meaning and sense of universal, abstract, social, moral, and ethical concepts through the concrete experience of the drama” (Norman in Bolton, 1985:155).

The research study by Heath and Roach, titled *Imaginative Actuality Learning in the Arts during the Non-school Hours* that formed part of a report, edited by Edward B. Fiske, “Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning. Washington DC: Arts Education Partnership and President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities” (1999) underpinned my initial exploration of the principles that would guide the *thick* description of the facilitation process (Mouton, 2001: 188). It focusses the attention on the pedagogical value and deep learning of the collaborative creative practice in the

classroom inherent not only to drama in education, but also arts education in general. As Fiske (Fiske, 1999, p. x) points out, “Learning is deepest when learners have the capacity to represent what they have learned, and the multiple disciplines of the arts all provide modes of representation”.

The research studies, *Learning In and Through the Arts: Curriculum Implications*, by Burton et al. (1999); *Imaginative actuality: Learning in the arts during non-school hours*, by Heath and Roach (1999); *Involvement in the Arts and Human Development: General Involvement and Intensive Involvement in Music and Theatre Arts*, by Catterall, et al. (1999) reflect the value of arts education, but only pertains to the reading that informed the initial proposal for this study.

Devised Theatre techniques are standard practice in the context of Applied Theatre: “Rehearsal can be seen as a collaborative process of investigation, research, trial and error, negotiation and often improvisation that leads to a fixed version of a play-text prepared for the public” (Prendergast, 2013: xi-xii). As Applied Theatre admits Drama in Education to its fold, it is a reasonable assumption that the drama teacher can learn about facilitation practices from Applied Theatre practices. In order for the drama teacher to navigate the core ideals of Applied Theatre, as suggested by Schonmann (2005: 34), which are “concerned with finding tools for, or with targeting, learning and empowerment, personal development, discussing themes, effecting social change, and making decisions” the proposed study will lean heavily on Applied Theatre methodology to guide the “inward” journey.

The article that shaped many arguments underpinning the proposal for this study, is the *Editor's Review of The Aesthetics of the Oppressed* by Augusto Boal, translated by Adrian Jackson and *The Theatre of Urban: Youth and Schooling in Dangerous Times* by Kathleen Gallagher, by Radhika Rao published in the Fall Issue of the *Harvard Educational Review* of 2008. In this article Rao (online 2008) points out that drama in education, when related to the egalitarian philosophy and the focus on self-actualisation purported by the work of practitioners such as Gallagher and Boal, can “[present] itself as a potentially powerful medium of citizenship education”.

Devised Theatre is ultimately a form of participatory theatre with the focus on creative negotiation and collaboration. The works of Augusto Boal namely *Theatre of the Oppressed* (2008); *The Rainbow of Desire* (1995) and *Games for Actors and Non-actors* (2002) are therefore intrinsic to this study. The pedagogical value of the processes inherent to theatre-making is at the heart of this study. “Through theatre”, Boal (Rao, online 2008) claims, “citizens can engage in their world actively and in turn discover themselves in a more authentic fashion, rather than being mere passive recipients of information and messages about them being conveyed through media such as TV, the Internet, etc.”

This principle certainly tracks with Schnomann's (2005) view of the values imbedded in applied theatre as stipulated in a very informative although troubling article, *'Master' versus 'Servant': Contradictions in Drama and Theatre Education*. The discourse as to whether Applied Theatre should be deemed a separate or exclusive theatrical form and that may no longer serves as umbrella term to include Drama in Education, as suggested in Judith Ackroyd's article, *Applied Theatre: An Exclusionary Discourse?* (2007), is not a discussion that this study will involve itself with.

Shifra Schonmann's (2005) suggestion that the aesthetic values inherent theatre are often overlooked in the context of Applied Theatre, is thought provoking. This study will reflect on the aesthetic principles and values of the Devised Theatre practice in a secondary school educational context. The three key components advocated by Heathcote, referred to in Bolton (1985), that should govern praxis in the drama classroom, i.e. that it enables learners or "theatre-makers to address matters of personal concern, to interrogate topical issues, and to extend the aesthetics and reception of performance" supports this intention (Govan, Nicholson, & Normington, 2007: 4).

The methodology of the facilitation practice that this study hopes to unpack will be guided by *A Facilitator's Handbook for Working in the Community* (2013) by Monica Prendergast and Juliana Saxton – especially aiding in the creation and fostering of a "safe space" where the learners feel comfortable enough to take creative risks (Rao, online 2008).

Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research by Johns W. Creswell (2012); *All You Need to Know About Action Research* by Jack Whitehead and Jean McNiff (2005); *The Action Research Planner: Doing Critical Participatory Action Research* by Robin McTaggart and Stephen Kemmis and McTaggart (2013) were very helpful in laying the foundation for the theoretical design for this study. A paper by Bob Dick prepared for the research symposium at the Australian and New Zealand ALARPM/SCIAR conference held in May 2003 titled, *What can action researchers learn from grounded theorists?*, created the basis for the argument of utilising grounded theory to underpin the action research design and methodology that this study explores.

A very informative and valuable chapter from a book titled *Electronic collaborators: Learner centred technologies for literacy, apprenticeship, and discourse* (1998) edited by Curtis Jay Bonk and Kira S. King, which focusses on collaborative practice in the fields of information technology and education, found resonance with this study since it explores and advocates participatory education. The chapter is titled, *Searching for Learner-Centred, Constructivist and Sociocultural Educational*

Learning Tools (1998) by Bonk and Cunningham.

The works I included in the Literature Review section are by no means the only works reviewed or referenced in this study; I specifically mentioned these articles, books and chapters of books since this body of work served to initiate, guide, influence and reign in the emerging theory and the resulting praxis illustrated in this study.

Chapter 2: Exploring workshop in the context of South African Workshop Theatre

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will explore the history, intentions, content and form of South African Workshop Theatre. The school curriculum requires of the drama teacher in the South African context to analyse scripts created in this genre and to have her learners create or workshop plays/scenes by employing the techniques and performance generating strategies utilised by the theatre practitioners who worked in this genre. The play generating process of workshop utilises are immensely valuable, inspiring and thought provoking. However, the instigating and central argument that underpins this study is that I believe that the workshop strategies presented in the school curriculum can and should be extended by contemporary devising strategies. However, this study cannot prove this argument if it does not explore Workshop Theatre in the South African context, first.

As stated in Chapter 1, the most consistently prescribed plays for FET learners in this genre are: *Woza Albert!* (1981) workshopped by Mbongeni Ngema and Percy Mtwa in collaboration with Barney Simon, and *The Island* (1971) and *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* (1973) created by John Kani and Winston Tshona in collaboration with Athol Fugard. I categorise these plays under the umbrella term of South African Workshop Theatre, firstly, since they are prescribed across the board for Grade 10 and 11 drama learners, where it falls under the topic, South African Theatre. In the Grade 10 CAPS for Dramatic Arts these plays may be utilised by the drama teacher as an example of South African Workshop Theatre (see TABLE 2.1), and in the Grade 11 CAPS for Dramatic Arts these plays are studied as examples of Protest/Resistance plays.

Secondly, I use the umbrella term explicitly, since in both grades the practical component of the South African Theatre topic requires of learners to workshop a scene/short play to reinforce their theoretical knowledge (see RSA Department of Education, 2011: 22; 28).

It is the supposition of this study that the in-depth review of South African Workshop Theatre as form will provide the drama teacher with the WHAT (as stated in the main research question, see section 1.2) and thus agency to facilitate the HOW, or the practice of workshop as a performance strategy, effectively. This chapter will be related to as the starting point of the intended roadmap that this study proposes to be. I will conclude this chapter by tabling a summative description of how the newly acquired knowledge were applied in practice in relation to the resource pack designed for the purpose of this study.

2.2 Content and form

South African Workshop Theatre came into being during the early 1970s. The historical significance of the play-making strategies and content of this innately indigenous form of theatre, also referred to as Protest Theatre/Resistance Theatre and Theatre of Testimony evolved in the hands of theatre practitioners such as Barney Simon and Athol Fugard and their various collaborators (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 28; Kruger, 1999: 147). It speaks to the relevance of the inclusion of this genre and performance style in the CAPS for the FET phase.

South African Workshop Theatre plays were conceived during the apartheid era and served as a creative collaborative vehicle by South African singers, actors, musicians and writers to tell uniquely South African stories, about South African people. This manner of creative collaboration gave the practitioners who created these plays the opportunity to give ‘testimony’ of the hardships and suffering South Africans, like themselves, experienced under an unjust, discriminatory political system (Fleishman, 1991; Hauptfleisch, 2007; Kruger, 1999).

According to Ian Steadman (1990: 2), the study of performance is the study of “a complex, multi-dimensional cultural practice”. South African Workshop Theatre evolved out of a desire by practitioners – who comprised of groups such as the Serpent Players, Black Consciousness theatre groups, Workshop 71, The Company, and Junction Avenue Theatre Workshop Company – to create a form that served to encapsulate the cultural expression and creative collaborative efforts unique to the South African experience. Through their efforts during the early 1970’s, these practitioners managed to formalise the performance “conventions” that could articulate “a local identity” in which they could interrogated the political and socio-economic circumstance of the culturally oppressed people residing in apartheid South Africa (Steadman, 1990: 16).

This form of theatre that so “captured the imagination of audiences” through its multi-dimensional and cultural specific explorations “were crystallised in the processes of rehearsal” (Steadman, 1990: 16). That is why the term ‘workshop’ is applicable to this form in the first place. Steadman defined these explorations as “adversarial” or “oppositional” theatre that introduced “formal innovations like episodic structures, quick shifts of scene and tempo, oral narrative, music and street rhythms, jazz, and factory work-rhythms” (Steadman, 1990: 20; 18). This description holds with Kruger’s (1999: 147, 167) clarification of the techniques utilised by the “theatre of testimony” or “protest theatre”. South African Workshop Theatre allowed practitioners involved in its creative collaborative processes to identify with the work on a personal level, regarding both its content and form

(Steadman, 1990: 18).

Therein lies the intrinsic value of South African Workshop theatre: the practitioners involved could personally identify with the content of the plays, since the stories it told of racial suppression and disempowerment, were the performers' own stories. Therein also lies the validity, importance and political significance of the thematic content and narratives of the prescribed works, and why drama learners in South African secondary schools can only benefit from engaging with this genre.

The influence of this genre still reverberates in South African schools and on South African stages because at its inception it was steeped in social, political and thus historical significance. As Williams (in Steadman, 1990: 18) points out:

Here, undoubtedly, is the point of growth of any drama of our century: to go where reality is being formed, at work, in the streets, in assemblies, and to engage at those points with the human needs to which the actions relate.

From these scholars' description of this form, even though they seemingly do not agree on the name that delineates this genre, one can start isolating the distinctive inner workings of the workshop processes and performance practice.

South African Workshop plays are distinguished from other theatrical genres by quite a number of factors. For the purpose of this study I extend Steadman's above description of the form and content of this genre, by a paraphrased summary of Loren Kruger's (1999:147) description:

Content

- the dramatic interpretation of individual and collective narratives
- the topics are politically provocative

Form

- performers utilised physical and verbal comedy
- the impersonation of multiple roles with minimal props
- performers directly addressed the audience
- performers represented themselves and their own convictions as well as those of fictional characters
- the collaborators employ the style and vibrancy of the township musical and variety show

- the collaborators experimented with the techniques and performance conventions of Grotowski's 'poor theatre' and Brecht's 'social gest'

Thus the philosophical and theoretical model which serves as (what could be considered) a template for the typical South African Workshop play draws on both European and South African performance modes.

South African Workshop Theatre served as a vehicle for the expression of the socio-economic and political experience of an intensely personal nature, thus it is laden with extremely complex and emotionally laden themes. To require of learners in Grade 10 and 11 to workshop a scene/ short play in the South African Theatre context is therefore no small matter, especially if the drama teacher wants to honour the legacy of this form and its creators (see RSA Department of Education. 2011: 22; 28).

I remember how worried I was when I first started teaching this form. I was never entirely sure if the standard of my notes (see Recommended resources: RSA Department of Education, 2011: 21) that informed my teaching practice were sufficient. I felt at a loss to know how deeply I should delve with my Grade 10 and 11 learners into the practice of Grotowski's "poor theatre" or the techniques of Brecht's "epic theatre" on the rehearsal floor. They were untrained actors after all. Yet I knew that it was necessary to engage with the material as deeply and sincerely as possible in order to serve the seriousness of the personal and social-political convictions that the playwrights working in the South African Workshop genre embedded in the content. The playwrights often risked their freedom to bring their stories to the attention of South African and international audiences. Kruger (1999: 151) mentions for instance that The Space program notes for *Sizwe Banzi is Dead*, "listed the participants (including Fugard) by I.D. numbers only [...] shielding Kani and Ntshona (temporarily) from police interference".

For the drama teacher in South African schools, the first port of call when exploring the methodology and techniques embedded in South African Workshop Theatre is the content of the play scripts alluded to in this chapter. It is safe to say that the collaborators left the marks of their individual, creative and collaborative processes in the script itself. The drama teacher should secondly also be able to ascertain from the curriculum guidelines which creative processes she should have her learners incorporate in their own workshoped plays – see TABLE 2.1 as an example.

TABLE 2.1 Understand the workshop (play-building) process in the South African context

Theory

- Communal creation
- Process of workshopping
 - Idea
 - Research/observation (oral/written)/reflection
 - Improvisation
 - Selection
 - Polished improvisation
 - Performance
 - Recording
- Episodic nature of workshopping
- Dramatic and theatrical linking devices such as narrator figure, music, placards, Posters, film

Practical

- Explore process of workshopping in order to create a performance
- Establish personal and social discipline
- Use improvisation to develop characters, structure and scenes
- Script, rehearse and polish the performance
- Develop vocal and physical communication tools for performance
- Demonstrate both group and individual performance skills in improvisation and Acting
- Conduct ongoing self and peer assessment

(RSA Department of Education. 2011: 22)

Over the years I have accumulated material on South African Workshop Theatre practitioners' creative processes. During the course of this study I however also came across the Master's Thesis of Mark Fleishman (1991), titled, "Workshop Theatre in South Africa in the 1980s: A Critical Examination with specific reference to Power, Orality and the Carnavalesque" which I found particularly relevant to my teaching praxis. Fleischman's research provides valuable information and insight that may assist the drama teacher when considering the design and scaffolding of learner resources that would guide the workshop processes in her classroom – and in such a manner that would help the creative journey to unfold as authentically and critically reflective as possible.

2.3 South African Workshop Theatre in the classroom: the physical making process⁴

One of the most distinguishing characteristics of South African Workshop Theatre, according to Fleishman (1991: 1), is that this form of theatre relies on the creative collaboration between participants or the "physical making" of a performance, rather than the more traditional form of "making" a play, which is script writing. He contends that: "Any written script that exists of a performance created in workshop is the sum total of this physical making, usually produced after the total making is complete..." (Fleishman, 1991: 73). He continues that the script would often then

⁴ A term/concept employed by Mark Fleischman (1991: 73).

only to give actors a very basic narrative and/ or structure to work with, which is in keeping with the improvisational nature of South African Workshop Theatre, wherein actors, who created the ‘scripts’ in rehearsal, would often extend their dialogue in performance depending on the audience and performance space (1991: 84). This suggests that the script is a malleable, flexible entity, reliant on the skill of the actor.

According to Fleischman (1991: 90), it is important that the script is created by the performer at the moment of performance. This form of script creation on the rehearsal floor, which extends to performance, is a far cry from the more traditional western theatre tradition, where the script can be considered as sacrosanct. Fleischman (1991: 73) also notes, that only when absolutely necessary did practitioners have a copy of the script ready – for instance when stage-managers needed to have a prompt-copy, or when lighting and sound technicians needed to record their cues. It therefore follows that when a script is created in the drama classroom, within the context of the South African Workshop tradition, the learners as authors may extend their dialogue in an improvisational manner during performance. In my experience the scripts created by learners in this manner often lacked the ‘language’ or emotional literacy to serve as satisfactory vehicle for the seriousness and the social relevance of the themes evident in this genre. The quality of the learners’ performances suffered as a result. Fleischman’s insights in the play-making processes can serve to alleviate this problem.

Fleishman (1991: 74) breaks down the creative process of “making” workshop plays into “four basic strands”; not all workshop groups utilised each of these components, nor do these components always follow the other. When employed as guiding principles of the dramatic processes that workshop entails, it can enhance the experience of the participants – especially in a secondary school context. Fleishman (1991: 74) lists the four basic strands as follows:

1. Group work and learning to play
2. Observation
3. Presentation
4. Selection

It is no coincidence that the CAPS for the FET phase list some of these strategies (see TABLE 2.1) as the theoretical principles on which the workshop praxis should be built. The CAPS does omit the presentation strategy which may deduct from the overall quality of the play and performance.

2.3.1 Group work: trust and learning to play

The most fundamental characteristic of the workshop process is that the resulting performance or product presented to the audience is the result of creative collective processes or what Fleishman (1991: 70) calls the “group nature” of the form. The final “script” is a collective creation as all the members of the process are responsible for the product that is shaped by “some form of collective interaction” on the rehearsal floor (Fleishman, 1991: 70).

Fleishman distinguishes between two categories of creative collective activities typical to the South African Workshop Theatre processes. The first category speaks to the diverse nature of the group which is inevitably made up of individuals with different backgrounds and skills. Therefore he suggests trust building exercises to help aid group cohesion. These exercises are usually comprised of physical activities wherein participants are required to entrust their physical safety to a partner or fellow group members. In this matter he concurs with Clive Barker that “the use of another person, to whom one trusts the security of one's body, is an important part of the work of building a group” (Barker in Fleishman, 1991: 77).

Fleishman (1991: 77) describes trust exercises as activities that “involve the participants doing something that they would not normally do because it involves putting their bodies at some kind of physical risk and then trusting the remainder of the group to prevent anything adverse from happening to them”. These types of exercises are very useful to utilise in the drama classroom, since it may in fact break down barriers created by social, gender related, and cultural issues teenagers typically experience. Trusting one's fellow group members to catch you when you jump into their arms for instance, can be extremely liberating – due to the sheer novelty of the experience. It can also be quite an empowering experience for the catchers, since the individuals may realise that it is within the power of the group to stop physical harm coming to one of their members. Arguably, more importantly, trust exercises, like most play building improvisation exercises, have the potential to make learners look at each other in a new light. They surprise each other with their bravery and willingness to drop their social masks. It is for this very reason that I often include in the reflective discussion sessions after warm-ups, trust building and/ or improvisation exercises, questions such as: Who surprised you today? Alternatively, who impressed you today, and why?

The second category is that of “play”. The word play suggests a willingness to let go, and to let the creative collective strategies inherent to playmaking, take over. Whether it be trust building exercises, activities that include closing your eyes and making soundscapes that invoke a city or forest, to quack like duck and move like a duck or to improvise with creating characters such as an old decrepit beggar woman – these activities are all outside of the scope of the learners' experience and thus require of

them to be in the moment, to step outside of their comfort zones and to “play” along. Here Fleishman concurs with Keith Johnstone that there are people who are fundamentally equipped to say “Yes” to suggestions, who are naturally responsive and happy to be let go, and that there are people who struggle to be in the moment, to be spontaneous and giving. As Johnstone in Fleishman states:

There are people who prefer to say 'Yes', and there are people who prefer to say 'No'. Those who say 'Yes' are rewarded by the adventures they have, and those who say 'No' are rewarded by the safety they attain. There are far more 'No' sayers around than 'Yes' sayers, but you can train one type to behave like the other. (1991: 77)

Saying ‘Yes’ can be as contagious and saying ‘No’ in the secondary school classroom context. Here the teacher as facilitator of ‘play’ has a great responsibility to endeavour to design the collective creative activities which she involves her learners in to be interesting, fun and challenging. She must ensure that she balances out the amount of ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ sayers in their work groups and she must let her enthusiasm shine through. Only then does she stand the chance of ‘training’ the “one type to behave like the other” as Johnstone suggest or as I see it – to ensure that learners trust the creative process.

All creative collective playmaking strategies fundamentally ask of participants to support and rely on each other physically, mentally and creatively; it develops participants’ skills in the art of giving of themselves and to trust that their creative offers⁵ will be reciprocated in kind.

2.3.2 Observation

Observation as a play-building strand is another key performance generating strategy of South African Workshop Theatre. Practitioners, such as Barney Simon, would send their performers into the streets as it were to seek out characters, contexts and narratives; the participants would then improvise scenarios in order to contextualise narratives and characters on the rehearsal floor.

There are two styles of observation that may be utilised. The first, I call passive observation and the second, active observation. Passive observation, I deem the ‘safer’ option of the two, and can thus be readily utilised by drama teachers in a secondary school context. This type of observation requires of the participant to observe and listening to subjects from a distance. Active observation requires of the participant to engage directly with a subject, i.e. entering into a dialogue with the subject, listening to

⁵ “Accepting offers (a term endemic to the practice of Theatre Sports founded by Keith Johnstone) means that a person in role in an improvisation is open to suggestions given by a partner or partners, or by participants” (Prendergast, 2013: 19).

their stories, and/ or actively immersing him or herself in the life world of the subject or subjects. This type of observation can be quite hazardous. During the workshop process of *Born in the RSA* for instance, the actor, Neil McCarthy, who created the character of an apartheid spy, “actually visited and applied for a job at the infamous John Voster Square police station where Thenjiwe a character in the play is later detained” (Fleishman, 1991: 82).

When performers go out to do observation they see stories happening around them, stories played out over time as drama with the streets as stage. Stories embodied in looks, gestures, moments. (Fleishman, 1991: 83)

In the following section, I will only focus on the possible educational consequences of passive observation. The potentially significant educational consequences of this strand is that it encourages learner to hone their ability to empathise with people from all walks of life in relation to what Nussbaum (in Roa, 2008) calls the “compassionate imagination”.

In order to really ‘see’ a fellow human being well enough to transpose his/ her physicality, personality and possible context to the rehearsal floor, the learner must be able to imagine the potential character’s world, and the motivations and intentions that shaped him/ her. By imagining a possible character history and context of the person/people being observed, learners consequently grow in their ability to empathise with the people they observe so attentively. This approach to characterisation often translates to a more heartfelt performance of the character that the learner create, rather than a mere stereotypical representation of a character.

Nussbaum (in Roa, 2008) points out that all art forms that “involve storytelling and listening” and one can safely include the workshop strategy of observation as an action verb here, not only “help the citizen develop empathy or ‘compassionate imagination’, but they also enable an individual to stand back and evaluate her own judgment” (in Rao, online 2008). This form of evaluation can be extended through reflection activities such as class discussion, group discussions and written assignments.

2.3.3 Presentation

In this strand of the workshop process, participants would “present” their findings obtained during the observation phase to the rest of their group or class. During this phase participants would present the characters they have observed, in role. In order to create and represent a character based on a ‘real’ person – e.g. the old woman slowly making her way down the street; the quarrelsome, next door neighbour; the bored, teenage girl behind the check-out counter – on the rehearsal floor, learners

have to consider which appropriate gestures to use to best emulate how the person moves. This activity requires of learners to imagine and experiment with the ways the character might interact with the world.

The structure and activities that make up of this strand of the workshop process are up to the facilitator. In a secondary school context, a teacher can for instance have the rest of the class interview the learner in role, which would help her and the rest of the learners to come to terms with the character and contexts presented by the learner. Learners could also pose questions to the character to help them understand him/ her better. A further development of this creative process could take place in the form of improvised scenes between two or more learners in role. Fleishman (1991:83) refers to these type of activities as “creatively elaborated through play”. “These improvisations,” Fleischman (1991: 90) writes, “are usually based on themes suggested by the performers or the director as a result of things emerging from the observation strand of the process”. The onus is on the teacher to plan and guide this style of improvisation in relation to performance outcomes previously established and agreed upon by the participants of the workshop. Fleishman (1991: 74) writes that “improvisation in its various forms is part of most of the strands” that make up the dramatic processes of Workshop Theatre. Improvisation and discussion drive the presentation strand since it is during this strand in “which segments are formed which will later make up the episodes of the play (Fleishman, 1991: 83).

It is during this strand that learners are exposed to a very valuable educational consequence, which Roa refers to as, “transgression” – which is a self-reflective process that occurs when a learner take on the role and/ or create a character based upon the person that he/she had observed. “Transgression” infers that the learner not only learn to “see things from another perspective”, she also gains insight into “the way she herself represents and interprets the world and others around her. And in doing so, she learns about herself” (Rao, online 2008). This notion ties in with Nussbaum’s assertion that telling stories teaches learners to evaluate their own judgements and opinions (in Rao, online 2008). Experimentation with observation and embodiment of characters via gesture, according to Pickering (2005: 85) “one of the principal nonverbal codes of communication available to the performer” is a significant component of embodied learning processes and will be explored fully, in this context, in Chapter 4.

2.3.4 Selection

The final workshop strand isolated by Fleischman (1991), is that of selection. This strand includes

the selection and arrangement of key improvised segments. The workshop participants would typically select (or reject) and arrange the key “segments created or composed in improvisations and recorded”. The selected segments that ultimately constitute the “text” or script may comprise of “words, gestures, movement, dance and song” or just consist of “an agreed schema or sequence of events” (Fleishman, 1991: 95). The curriculum guidelines (see TABLE 2.1) certainly aids the drama teacher’s practice during this strand. I would like to briefly focus the attention on three creative processes stipulated by the curriculum to prove this point, that of “polished improvisation; Episodic nature of workshoping; Dramatic and theatrical linking devices such as narrator figure, music, placards” (RSA Department of Education, 2011).

The process of polished improvisation infers that the characters and scenes created during improvisation are revised and practiced to be polished scenes and/ or segments during the rehearsal phase. Prendergast and Saxton (2013: 19) explains polished improvisation as follows:

Prepared/polished improvisation: These are improvisations that are shared as part of the devising process. The scene is being “worked up” by repeated improvising until the players are secure in the choices that they will be making.

Since South African Workshop Theatre relies on Brecht’s episodic approach to the structuring of a plot (see TABLE 2.1), the selected polished scenes and /or segments can then be organised to form a short play. Brecht’s approach is a very useful tool to use for learners who are inexperienced at scriptwriting. Pickering (2005: 24) states:

The use of the episode enables playwrights to move back and forward in time, to juxtapose events from the past with those of the present, to move swiftly between imagined locations and to present delicate fragments for consideration rather than huge slices of experience.

Learners therefore do not have to be too concerned with the literary devices of character development and plot progression, for instance. Furthermore utilising the “linking devices such as narrator figure, music, placards, posters (and) film,” suggested by the curriculum guidelines (RSA Department of Education, 2011:22), learners should find it relatively easy to “stitch together” (to borrow a phrase from Fleishman, 1991: 95) their performance pieces.

2.4 Facilitating the workshop process in a secondary classroom context

The dramatic processes that the drama teacher have to negotiate when implementing the curriculum

guidelines for workshopping in the context of South African Workshop Theatre is quite complex. I would like to bring to mind the questions that initiated this study in relation to the learning outcomes the CAPS for FET (see TABLE 2.1 as an example). They are:

- What is my concern?
- Why am I concerned?
- What experiences can I describe to show why I am concerned?
- What can I do about it? What will I do about it?

(McNiff & Whitehead, 2006: 3; 79)

I believe these questions can be quite effectively employed to guide the drama teacher's facilitation of the workshop process.

In the preceding chapter I have set out my "specific educational problem"⁶. My first forays as a facilitator of workshop were very ineffectual.

I simply fell short in enabling my learners to experience or share the same passions and creative output of the practitioners who created the South African Workshop plays during the apartheid years. The scripts created on the rehearsal floor always fell short in reflecting the ideal of authentic, theme related, vibrant storytelling and performance. The learners I teach are economically and socially privileged South Africans on top of which, they are part of what Berk and Trieber (2009) calls the "Net Genders"⁷. They have very little, if anything, in common with the practitioners' and actors' contexts and experiences that incited the conception and creation of the South African Workshop plays.

Bar a select few, my learners have no personal experience of the disempowering socio-political disadvantages the plays speak about. I soon realised, the only way to overcome this problem, is to give them the opportunity and tools to authentically translate as writers/performers and actor/researchers the issues close to their hearts in relation to the themes evident in the South African Workshop plays we study in class. Even though I tailored workshop process to the experiences and contexts of my learners, the workshop performances and improvised scripts still seemed quite

⁶ "Educators" according to Creswell (2012: 577) use action research when they "aim to improve the practice of education by studying issues or problems they face. Educators reflect about these problems, collect and analyse data, and implement changes based on their findings".

⁷ "The Net Generation has been branded as 'digital natives'. They are 'native speakers' of the language of computers, video games, and the Internet" (Prensky in Berk & Trieber, 2009: 34).

superficial to me.

Nussbaum (in Prendergast & Saxton, 2013: 6) succinctly summarises the shift I had to make in my own thinking and practice when she writes:

[T]he arts, by generating pleasure in connection with acts of subversion and cultural reflection, produce an enduring and even attractive dialogue with the prejudices of the past, rather than one fraught with fear and defensiveness.

I now realise that I was very naïve in my wish that my learners could emulate the passion of the South African Workshop pioneers. It took me a while to realise that the creative collaborative processes that learners undertake during the four different strands stipulated by Mark Fleischman are where the ‘real’ learning occurs. The artistry and creative ingenuity that erupts when learners work together in this form, has become my inspiration. However I did owe it to myself and my learners to learn how to guide them more effectively with regards to the artistic merit of their performances and scripts in this form. I found the answers to this end in the practice and processes of Devised Theatre and the diverse and inventive strategies and styles practitioners and scholars in this field employ. I will share my acquired knowledge in this style of theatre making in the following chapter.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to give a summative explanation of how I applied the literature explored on the topic of South African Workshop Theatre in the form of a table.

TABLE 2.2, see below, is loosely based on the “Process and Categories within the Flow of Research in Grounded Theory” (see TABLE 1.9 in Chapter 1) (Creswell, 2012: 432). It relates to the final sequence of procedures of Creswell’s proposed table, which deals with the communication of how the newly acquired understanding of the researcher can be applied in practice. In this table I relate how my newly acquired knowledge about South African Workshop strategies found resonance in the conceptualisation of learner resources and in my teacher practice.

The final column of TABLE 2.2 gives evidence of the learner activities I included in the resource pack designed for this study. To facilitate the reading of TABLE 2.2 I include a hard copy of Appendix A, entitled Conservation: Devising an Environmentally Conscious Performance Piece. This

resource will be unpacked in Chapter 6 of this study.

TABLE 2.2 Application of literature explored: South African Workshop Theatre

Teacher's Role	Relevance to Classroom Praxis	Application to resources
She sources and facilitate trust building group activities	Learners are taken out of their comfort zones when they interact in physically challenging pair and group trust-building exercises.	See pp. 7: Learners play Boal's Seesaw game, as well as the extended version.
She treats learners as actors – thus employing constructivist teaching approach	Learners feel empowered by the responsibility to “take charge of their own learning” (DeZutter, 2011: 30)	See Class discussions: pp. 4 – 6. These discussions and relating reflective activities are designed to conscientise learners; make them aware of their own world view.
The teacher creates activities to engage learner-actors as researchers and observers	Learners world view and perspective are reviewed and developed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - when they research and discuss issues related to themes - when they have passively observe people in real life contexts and discuss their experience 	See pp. 1. Learners' are required to do research which will form part of class and group discussions.
She facilitates class and group discussions in a throughout the research and/or observation component of the task. (Not all performance tasks requires the observation of subjects; this strand can be replaced by research.)	Learners are required to reflect, write and discuss the experiences their research and/ observations exposed them to in a thoughtful, creative and collaborative manner.	
The teacher create/choose and	Learners improvise in the	See scaffolded

facilitate improvisation activities that could generate script.	larger group/ class. Learners go into groups and polish improvisation activities.	improvisation activities: pp. 9 – 13. Learners record all Improvisation activities to use during the Selection process, pp. 13 – 14.
The teacher facilitates learner-actor to create/write scripts and as individual and/ or group creations.	Learners engage in group discussions around the artistic, and aesthetic merit of the polished improvisations during the selection phase.	Learners write monologues and dialogues for Presentation and Selection, see pp. 13 - 14

Chapter 3: Exploring Devised Theatre

A devised theatrical performance originates with the group while making the performance, rather than starting from a play text that someone else has written to be interpreted. A devised theatre product is work that has emerged from and been generated by a group of people working in collaboration. (Oddey, 1996: 1)

3.1 Introduction

The themes, characters and narratives of South African Workshop plays prescribed by the national curriculum of CAPS for Dramatic Arts Gr 10 – 12 are collaborative creations comprised of the political, artistic, personal and social expressions of its practitioners (Fleishman, 1991; Hauptfleisch, 2007; Kruger, 1999; Steadman, 1990). The three works alluded to in this study as specific examples of this genre (as stipulated by the CAPS for Dramatic Arts in the FET phases) are *The Island*, *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* and *Woza Albert!* It is the assumption of this study that drama teachers have to look further afield than the performance generating practices of South African Workshop Theatre, as given by the CAPS for the FET phase, in order to find performance generating strategies and performance modes relevant to learners and the world they live in⁸. The study intends to build on and extend the play-making strategies of practitioners who created these plays by exploring and investigating Devised Theatre. This study does not intent to throw the baby out with the bath water, firstly because South African Workshop Theatre as a genre, as well as the performance generating strategies it comprises of, are required curriculum outcomes for drama learners in the FET phase; secondly the study and practise of this indigenous genre illustrates to learners how powerful, entertaining and thought-provoking plays can be that are created through creative collaborations with the intention to serve as a vehicle for personal, artistic, social and political expression.

As early as the early 1990s Ian Steadman (1990:20) warned South African theatre practitioners of indigenous Workshop Theatre, against becoming “trapped” in “static formulae”: “The major difficulty facing the new theatre practitioners [...] is that oppositional theatre in a changing society needs also to be constantly changing”. He makes an interesting point when he states that when “adversarial theatre becomes popular, it needs constantly to re-examine and redefine itself and its relationship to popular consciousness as that popular consciousness changes” (Steadman, 1990: 20).

⁸ This is an important requisite of learning that occurs in the drama class which is illustrated in way Boal sees the role of the theatre: “Through theatre, he states, “citizens can engage in their world actively and in turn discover themselves in a more authentic fashion, rather than being mere passive recipients of information and messages about them being conveyed through media such as TV, the Internet” (in Rao, 2008).

The political landscape of South Africa has changed dramatically over the past 20 years, which in turn created a shift in the country's "popular consciousness". The themes of political oppression, injustice, unfair rule of law, abuse of power, discrimination, racism and disempowerment are still relevant for South African teenagers; but their social and popular consciousness have certainly shifted. The social context in which the learners I teach interact, has shifted to the unsupervised spaces introduced by social media and the internet where learners 'hang out', "negotiate identity, gossip, support one another, jockey for status, collaborate, share information, flirt, joke and goof off" (Boyd in Haddon, 2015: 5).

In order to excite learners about socially and/or politically conscious theatre, the drama teacher arguably also has to find fresh and contemporary playmaking methods to build on the formulaic methods presented to her in the CAPS for FET document. It is the assumption of this study that investigating the flexible and inventive play making strategies of Devised Theatre – which in my opinion is an updated form of Workshop Theatre – may assist the drama teacher to expand her practice in the field. In the following section I would like to share my exploration of the content and form of Devised Theatre.

3.2 What is Devised Theatre?

Devised Theatre is a process driven performance style that defies genre and set formulas alike. Heddon and Milling (2006: 2) suggest that there is no overarching theory that would encapsulate this form of theatre. Devised Theatre is best describe in the "plural" since the generation of the performance is subject to context; therefore the best way to try to understand it would be to look at it "as a set of strategies" since the practice "defies neat definition or categorisation" (Govan et al., 2007: 7).

What distinguishes this form from other performance genres, and makes it amenable to the South African Workshop Theatre, is that the work/script/play originates on the rehearsal floor. The devising practice becomes a vehicle for theatre-makers that want to stretch the "limits of established practices" so that they can "develop artistically satisfying ways of working" (Govan et al., 2007). The artistic processes of the devised practice are created and shaped by the participants themselves to serve their needs and preferences as artists (Govan et al., 2007: 3). All the participants of the performance have an equal share in the creation of the devised performance whether they be actors, singers, physical theatre practitioners, dancers, designers, writers or directors. These creative collaborators may utilise creative strategies that can range from spontaneous improvisation, editing, rehearsing, researching,

writing, scoring, choreographing, discussion and debate. The creative processes and the resulting performance is a manifestation of group creativity, underpinned by the abiding characteristics of eclecticism, experimentation, and a democratic spirit (Govan et al., 2007: 5; 7).

Heddon and Milling (2006: 10) remind us that the “improvisational and creative aspect of performance, something akin to devising, has been a part of the folk arts or popular performance across time and across cultures”. Oddey (1996: 4) writes that what makes it such a distinctive form of theatre, is that the form is “concerned with the collective creation of art”. This governing characteristic supports the notion of actors as “creative performers”, which affords agency to actors (Govan et al., 2007: 29). The hierarchical barriers of traditional theatre that puts the lion’s share of the creative outcomes of a performance in the hands of the writer and theatre director, are broken down (Oddey in Govan et al., 2007: 5).

This “democratisation of processes of working”, evident in the philosophy that underpins Devised Theatre Govan et al. (2007: 47) write, is “one of the legacies of socially committed theatre of the twentieth century” which in part was “a political response” to “the hierarchical structures of established theatre in the first half of the century, which radical theatre-makers found politically restrictive and artistically stifling”.

Devising is a very “social and interactive” form of drama, Bresler (2007: 449) points out. The creative collective processes of devising is reliant on each group member and their personal perception of the world as well as their personal exploration of their own and their fellow devisor’s personal and creative journey. According to Oddey (1996: 1), the devising process therefore “reflects a multi-vision” or “series of images”, which are “interpreted” by the group and then creatively “stitched” together. She also describes the devising process as a journey of personal discovery when she points out:

Participants make sense of themselves within their own cultural and social context, investigating, integrating, and transforming their personal experiences, dreams, research, improvisation, and experimentation. (Oddey, 1996: 1)

The pedagogical significance of the above tenets of Devised Theatre lies in the fact that the creative journey that learners undertake has the potential to change, shift and possibly grow their personal perspectives. Throughout the devising process McCarthy, points out (2007: 450), learners gain a critical and discerning eye concerning the art of theatre making. Nicholson proposes that is in finding “creative solutions to artistic problems” that learners “gain new insights into how drama works as an

art form as they explore their own ideas” (Nicholson, 2000: 5).

There are a myriad of devising strategies that participants may dip into when they come together to create a performance piece in this form. This coupled with the democratic notion that every participant has an equal say in the making of the product can easily lead to the project going off the rails. Planning and setting creative goals are therefore essential (Oddey, 1996: 1).

I would like at this point to divide the devising process into Five Stages for the purpose of clarity, i.e.:

Stage One: Planning, designing and conceptualising

Stage Two: Research and response to stimuli

Stage Three: Discovery through creative collaborative strategies and discussion

Stage Four: Selecting, editing and polishing

Stage Five: Finalising of design choices

The first stage of the devising process suggested by Oddey (1996: 24), which I relegated to Stage Two of the devising process, begins with the “interaction between the members of a group and the starting point or stimulus chosen”. The interaction between members can infer discussions on the creative outcomes of the process, the performance style of the devised piece, the themes that underpin the eventual play and/or creative roles allocated to participants and the stimulus chosen. This period of the devising process can be described as a planning stage. The methods employed, which may include improvisation activities to help actors/ divisors to get to know each other better, depends on the ethos of the devising company.

I specifically relegated the response to stimuli to Stage Two of the devising process. The stimuli, provided in this stage, can be anything from autobiographical stories, newspaper articles, random objects, music, lyrics and images to all forms of published literature. The devising strategy of response to stimuli is specifically utilised with the eye on giving performers inroads into possible themes, narratives, structures and characters.

Each member in the group is influenced by his or her own worldview, opinions and artistic skills set when negotiating the stimuli. Since the response to stimuli, discussion and debate herald the starting point of the play-making process “it is important for a company to explore and experiment with a range of stimuli, to understand how the group operates in different situations” (Oddey, 1996: 25). There are quite a number of devices professional companies will include in this stage of the devising

process, to investigate, explore and grow their group dynamic. Oddey states 'getting to know each other' exercises are vital to the initial creative exploration. She includes, "exercises in communication, concentration, trust, sensitivity, movement, voice and improvisation" in the list of possible devising strategies (Oddey, 1996: 25). Since collaborative creation and the originality this creative process brings to the process and the resulting performance, the establishment of a group character and the building of relationships are essential. The devising practice gives each participant the opportunity to "confront the work" (Oddey, 1996: 24); to put forward his/her own perspectives which may open him/her up to criticism as their individual views might not go unchallenged. At the same time the non-hierarchical nature of the devising practice serves to develop "a sense of group cooperation, affiliation and unity" Oddey (1996: 24). As participants get to know each other and learn how to negotiate each other's strengths, weaknesses, and conflicts that may arise, they start to trust the process, which will ultimately lead to a product that reflects a cohesive group vision (Oddey, 1996: 43-44). As learners gain the ability to trust the process, so must the teacher. Kempe (2000: 68) points out that fundamental to an effective devising process is that the teacher should trust "the students' ability to generate something from nothing".

Govan et al. (2007: 12) also states that the diversity of practice of companies that are known for their devised performances (such as Australia's *Legs on the Wall*, Britain's *Forced Entertainment*, and the USA-based *Goat Island*) "challenge orthodoxies to develop new theatrical languages". There is a vast range of possible motivations behind the type of theatrical language that would inform the processes and products of devising companies, such as the political motivations, aesthetic concerns and/or artistic backgrounds of the different participants (Govan et al., 2007: 11).

A common characteristic of professional companies that work with or without the traditional authority of a director is that they are constantly evaluating, discussing, debating and criticising the work as they progress (Oddey, 1996: 44). Stage Four and Five of the devising process can be quite daunting to negotiate. The question arises, how does the participants go about putting together the final performance material? In answer to this question I would like to offer Mark Long's, the founding member of The People Show comments, statement (in Oddey, 1996: 43), "At some point in the creative, collaborative process, you do arrive at a group certainty" or "line of agreement". This notion of not knowing where the process may lead motivates Oddey's contention that planning is essential. As previously alluded, I will extend this discussion in section 3.3.1. The open-ended, exploratory nature of the devising processes always culminate in a performance for an audience, thus during Stages Four and Five of the "group agreements" – whether they be steered by a director, multiple

directors, or no director – will extend to:

- agreements on improvised material “stitched” together for performance (which may include an eclectic mix of performance modes from physical theatre, acting, singing to performance art);
- the finalising of the script in relation to the “original aims and objectives or initial decisions about form, content, or audience” (Oddey, 1996: 73); and
- the finalising of design choices on visual imagery, set, sound, costume and lighting etc.

In the context of the devising practice, script-writing strategies can be as diverse as performances themselves. Companies may hire a professional scriptwriter to observe and/or partake in discussions and improvisations, or one or more of the devisers can take on the role as scriptwriter. During Stages Two to Four, the devising strategies employed can be recorded on recording devices and/ or paper for editing and polishing purposes. Concerning the design aims, which I delegated to Stage Five, companies might hire professional artists, costume designers, sound and lighting designers to collaborate with, or company members themselves will take on the role of “designer/deviser” (Oddey, 1996:60).

The list of the possible multifaceted roles participants of the devising process may take on and the shared responsibility that the devising practice affords participants, are what arguably makes it such an attractive form. In this practice the success or artistic merit of the performance is no longer delegated as the responsibility of a single entity like the director, the producer or even the scriptwriter, the actors are just as responsible for the success of the product. The “hallmark” of devised theatre, as Oddey (1996: 11) puts it, is that it is process driven, its significance and ingenuity stem from creative collaboration, and the sharing of skills, stories and visions – the traditional role of the actor is thus extended.

It is the plurality of the methods and creative strategies devised practitioners employ and the egalitarian sharing of skills that initially drew me to research this practice in order to extend my teaching practice. These unique qualities however also presents its own set of difficulties, especially in the secondary school drama classroom.

I would like to reiterate at this point that I relate to the devising strategies, explored in this study, in reference to the curriculum requirements related to scenes created by means of polished improvisation in the CAPS for the GET (senior phase), and to the South African Workshop methods and

performance generating strategies in the CAPS for the FET phase. Towards this end I base the performance outcomes of the Devised Theatre Task created for the resource pack on *Horn of Sorrow* written by Nicholas Ellenbogen (see TABLE 3.1 and APPENDIX A). During the course of this study the devising practice and the principles and intentions it assumes, as related in the previous section, have come to govern all collaborative creative activities in my classroom. I will expand this statement in Chapter 7 of this study.

3.3 The Process: Practical considerations

The aim of this section is to put forward guidelines on the possible practical application of the fundamental intentions of Devised Theatre in the drama classroom. These guidelines are aimed at assisting the drama teacher in ensuring that the process of devising runs as smoothly as possible and that the artistic integrity of the form is upheld. I focus my argument, in the following sections, on my reading of Oddey's book, *Devising Theatre: A Practical and Theoretical Handbook* (1996) in relation to description of the working methods of a selection of diverse Devising Companies. This book provides first-hand accounts on the process of theatre practitioners working in this field of theatre making.

The fundamental intentions that underpin the devising process, which I single out in order to provide practical application guidelines for the drama teacher, are:

- Maintaining the democratic ideal
- Maintaining the artistic-aesthetic integrity
- Honing artistic intuition

Each of the above intentions will be explored, consecutively, as part of the discussions in the following subsections.

3.3.1 Planning & establishing group goals

The objective of this section is to relate the democratic intention and non-hierarchical processes inherent to Devised Theatre to the practical considerations thereof in the drama classroom. This would entail effective planning and establishing specific group goals.

In *Devising Theatre: A Practical and Theoretical Handbook* (1996), Oddey gives practical advice concerning time management and the establishment of group goals and group cohesion, which I believe may guide learners and serve the democratic intention and processes of the devising process.

In order to aid learners to meet creative targets, planning is essential, in my experience. This notion is reiterated by Peter Brook's (in Kempe, 2000:69) adage that "in the theatre, 'any-old-how' is the great and subtle enemy", if you do not plan and set systematic targets to be met in every lesson, the devising process can be a disastrous experience, especially for untrained student performers. The devising strategies of improvisation and seemingly simple activities such as group discussions and debate can make learners feel extremely vulnerable and exposed. It makes sense that they need a steady and safe platform to work from. It is for this reason that I propose that the conceptualising, design and planning of the devising process to be Stage One of the larger devising project. In this regard this study proposes that the drama teacher create a learner resource pack in the form of a workbook that explains the systematic layout and time awarded to each stage of the devising process; what the overarching creative outcomes of the project entails and the how and when each creative target should be met. It stands to reason that the themes and creative outcomes of the workbook must be related to the school curriculum for drama.

The first step that a teacher therefore should take when considering the design of the devising workbook, would be to establish a set time frame, within the limits of the school calendar in which participants can experiment and create new work. It is a good idea to set the performance and/ or assessment date first, and then to work backwards from there. Depending on the complexity of the devised performance, the teacher can then determine how many lessons and teacher/learners contact opportunities each devising stage would require. A set performance date keeps the learners on track and accountable.

There is a plethora of devising strategies that the drama teacher can dip into when she designs the devising workbook. The resource pack I included for the purpose of this study (see Appendix A) will give the reader an idea of what these strategies may entail.

Learners may need to utilise quite a number of devising strategies that would enable them to "develop" and "structure" an original performance. The key performance strategy professional practitioners utilise to generate new material, which can easily be applied in the drama classroom is that of improvisation. Heddon and Milling (2006: 9) stresses the versatility and functionality of improvisation as a devising strategy:

In the studio or in the workshop in the making of the performance, different devising practices will use improvisation that might involve the repetition and revision of breathing exercises, or physical, dance-based contact between performers, or everyday tasks, or verbal

interrogation, or character based interaction. It is the specific nature of the task, game, rules or structure within which improvisation occurs that conditions the possible outcomes, and contributes to the style of the resultant performance.

The devising strategy of improvisation will be carefully unpacked in the next chapter of the study.

In this chapter I have mentioned debating, discussion and response to stimuli and the exploration and investigation of ideas on the rehearsal floor (or workshopping) as possible devising strategies. It can seem quite challenging for a drama teacher to find or come up with suitably devising strategies that can be related to a specific curriculum topic or theme. I list below a number of strategies, theatrical devices and performance means that I have come across during the course of this study that a drama teacher can consider during the planning of the devising process, which I subcategorise under *Text Based Strategies* and *Performance Based Strategies*. This list is by no means conclusive, but it does reflect the eclectic and experimental character of the devising practice and performance. These lists may even be included in the devising workbook as a possible performance criteria.

Text Based Strategies:

- Deconstruction of existing play texts
- Deconstruction of works of literature, fairy tales, short stories and poetry
- Use of poetry
- Use of song lyrics
- The incorporation of statistics; internet sources; newspaper articles; etc. (Adapted from Kempe, 2000: 67)

Performance Based Strategies:

- Narration
- Song and soundscapes
- Group Silence
- Group reaction
- Animal mime
- Exaggeration
- Music
- Lighting
- Sound

- Projections
- Tableaux
- Movement
- Mime
- Multiple use of props
- Corral speaking (Adapted from Jessica's Swale's book, *Drama Games for Devising* (2012: 66))

Making lists of the performance and script generating strategies, procedures and methods, though informative, does not answer the question of how the process/ workshop stages, i.e. Stage Two and Three of the devising practice should play out.

Oddey (1996: 41) puts a series of questions forward that could serve as guidelines to the teacher during Stage One of a devising project, which can guide the teacher's thinking when conceptualising and designing/ choosing devising strategies for a specific project. They are:

1. What is it you want to devise, and why? What kind of theatre do you want to create?
2. Who are you devising for, and why?
3. What are your initial aims and objectives as a company for this project?
4. Is your content or subject matter the starting point for the work? What are the source materials?
5. Is the form or structure an important preliminary area for exploration?

Oddey suggests that early on in the devising process it is essential that the group should identify "the potential tools of devising that can be used to search, shape and structure the investigative route to be taken"; "roles and responsibilities should be allocated" as well as the "working structures" (Oddey, 1996: 42). In the secondary school context the above actions suggested by Oddey will be delegated to the drama teacher and/or teachers during Stage One of the devising process. However, learners can be responsible for setting out the rules and responsibilities for each group member. The teacher can include possible group-work guidelines, in the workbook to assist learners to negotiate the division of roles and/or labour within the different groups. Furthermore, the teacher should reiterate the notion of the positive and creative outcomes of the democratic decision-making repeatedly throughout the different stages of the devising process.

At this point, I would like to relate the main discussion points that the teacher may employ when

introducing the workbook to Oddey's explanation of the content and governing principles and/ or intention of the devising process, in the professional context.

On the handing out of the workbook, before the commencement of the devising process, the teacher should ideally introduce the workbook and discuss the significance of the content in relation to the curriculum. However, not only that – the teacher should prove to her learners why the content and the creative processes they are about to undertake is important and even transformative. The teacher should relate the underpinning intentions and principles of the devising practice, especially for learners in the GET (senior phase), concerning the educational value of creative collaboration, the importance and relevance of setting group goals.

“The most fundamental requirement for devising theatre”, writes Oddey (1996: 42), “is a passion or desire to say something”. A professional company will shape the devising processes accordingly in order to give voice and creative expression to the chosen topic and related themes. Essentially this company has thus established a group goal. (In the secondary school environment, the teacher as previously stated will set the ultimate group goal.)

In the secondary school context, the final group goal or the ultimate devised performance can easily be confused with formal performance assessments. The last thing that the teacher and learners should strive for is a perfect performance piece and excellent marks. By focussing on marks, the fundamental learning opportunities learners acquire during the process of creative collaboration are often overlooked, since it is the final performance the collaboration engenders that acquires the most focus. It is therefore very important that both the teacher and learners make a conscious paradigm shift – which entails all involved in the devising process to realise that the successful management and negotiation of the creative processes itself is just as important a goal as the final performance. Every lesson, during the devising process, can therefore become an opportunity to set and accomplish a new group goal. To enable learners to make this paradigm shift, the drama teacher should include activities and discussion points that will assist learners to reflect on their group's dynamics and progress during the devising process – and to be conscious of the role they play in the group's overall effectiveness.

Thus, learners stand to gain first-hand experience of the transformative effects of group orientated goals, throughout the devising process and not just after the process has culminated in a performance. Heath and Roach (1999:22) point out, “Group goals make clear the transformative effects of hard work, creative collaborative work and critique, and achievement”.

Stage Two and Three of the devising process can of course overlap since every teacher has her own

particular way of working. It is important the devising workbook content and layout, especially at this point in the devising process should serve the creative collaborative processes rather than dictate it. Research and response to stimuli, however, is a good way to start the devising project, since during this stage of the devising process, learners can think about, and discover their own individual perspectives on the themes their research and response to stimuli produces.

Stage Three of the devising practice may include trust exercises, improvisations, experimentation, and discovery through workshopping and polished improvisation. Within the classroom context, the choice of which strategies to employ is explicitly influenced by the aims of the curriculum. This can potentially become a tricky part of the devising process if the learners in a particular group do not get along.

The employment of trust exercises in the early stages of the devising process should aid in the generation of trust and familiarity between the participants, yet the devising process requires more than learners merely trusting and respecting each other as fellow performers. It requires of participants to reveal their inner selves; to trust the group creativity experimentation engenders; to let go, purposely, of their own preferences and to revel in the “multi-vision”⁹ the process offers all involved.

Oddey (1996: 24) states:

Members of a group beginning to devise theatre must be open to each other, building and developing honesty, trust, and, crucially, diplomacy! It is essential for each member to be able to reveal the personal, knowing that there is sensitivity and support within the group. Every individual must invest something of his or her person if the group is to communicate fully.

Trust and respect benefit the creative collaborative process because it muffles the ego: participants are more likely “to give up personal interests in particular areas of investigation in favour of decisions that may benefit the group to explore new directions” (Oddey, 1996: 25). When learners are encouraged to set the fundamental ideas of trust and respect as group goals, it will certainly enrich the collective creative processes inherent to the devising practice since it predetermines dialogue characterised by acceptance and a willingness to listen. Therefore the process of “continual evaluation” and “constant re-assessment” of the developing work via debate and discussions and improvisation can continue unhindered (Oddey, 1996: 43). In this regard Bolton’s (1985: 154) view on the methods employed by Dorothy Heathcote who treated children as “fellow artists” may be a

⁹ Oddey (1996: 3) defines the term “multi-vision” as a process that integrates “various views, beliefs, life experiences, and attitudes to changing world events”.

valuable tool in the hands of the drama teacher, in doing so she creates the opportunity for her pupils to relieve her of “power”, thus they acquire it. In the mode of Heathcote, Bolton (1985: 154) suggests learners should first be guided to look “outward before they can look inward”; self-indulgent, uninformed self-expression does not serve the learners, neither the creative collaborative process. When learners speak over each other, they forget to listen and contemplate each other’s point of view, thus they stop learning.

In order to assist learners in embracing the subject material and their own opinions and perspectives critically and objectively the drama teacher may focus the learners’ intentions on the importance and relevance of the themes the workbook/devising project deals with, whether it be dehumanizing effects of apartheid or the importance of conservation. She may offer learners explorative activities that would have them engage with the “issues, principles, implications, consequences, and responsibilities behind the facts” (Bolton, 1985: 154). Class discussion may also be employed as a simple, yet practical method of unpacking learners’ opinions in an objective way. When learners then engage with the emotionally laded themes such as the dehumanizing effects of apartheid, for instance via response to stimuli and improvisation activities their creative responses will be informed, conscious and respectful of the opinions of others.

It is unfortunate that the devised theatre that took shape in the 1970s could not sustain its radical oppositional, essentially democratic form, mainly due to changing cultural, economic and political landscapes. The 1990s saw this form of theatre adapting to the cultural climate of the times, becoming less radical, more focused on “skill sharing, specific roles, increasing division of responsibilities . . . and more hierarchical groups structures” (Oddey in Govan et al., 2007: 5).

It is heartening to note that in the drama classroom, “where devising is a regular requirement of examinations”, devised theatre maintains its democratic spirit, (Govan, et al., 2007: 6). It is within the educational context of drama as a school subject where the “undifferentiated patterns of work in which all participants share similar responsibilities for the production are still often encouraged” (Neelands and Dobson; Lamden in Govan et al., 2007: 5-6).

3.3.2 Considering roles: writer/deviser and director/deviser

Since its inception devised theatre focussed on the “collective creation of art”, veering away from “the prevailing ideology of one person’s text under another person’s direction” (Oddey in Govan, et al., 2007: 5). Since it is ideally an democratic process, the roles of especially the writer and the director are not as clearly defined. This could potentially prove to detract from the artistic-aesthetic integrity

of a performance. Shifra Schonmann warns against drama educators losing sight of the artistic-aesthetic roots of theatre, which she argues hampers development (Schonmann, 2005: 35).

In the context of professional devising theatre, the exact role and function of the scriptwriter and director depends on the specific company's philosophy. Oddey (1996: 49, 9) gives these conventional roles an open-ended treatment by calling them writer/deviser and director/deviser respectively. Disrupting the idea of one director's vision, or scriptwriters intentions can possibly lead to the lack theatrical integrity in the devised performance piece.

"The role of a writer", in the context of Devised Theatre, Oddey (1996: 49) maintains, "is significantly different from the conventional initiator and author of a script". She advises that it is important to establish what exactly the role and function of the writer should be in the initial stages of the devising process (Oddey, 1996: 51). In the context of devised theatre the script can take many forms, depending on the style and artistic vision of the production. The writer can be responsible for recording the improvisations and the resulting dialogue, adding and shaping dialogue, revising and editing the final script, in conjunction with and subjected to the vision of the company. In many instances the group of players will write together or team up to write sections of the play.

However Oddey (1996: 51) inadvertently cautions against collective writing, when she states that the devising practice has "been accused of producing poorly crafted plays that suffer from a lack of cohesive style and clear single vision". Again, the onus is on the company to choose how they want the script to take shape and form and by whose hand. Thus the onus is also on the teacher when and how the script, generated by the learners should take shape. McKean argues for collective writing when she states (in McCarthy, 2007: 49) "collaboration and the consideration of individual students' cultural, social, and academic backgrounds create a greater range of possibilities than work created by a single individual".

As previously alluded (see Text Based Strategies), the script can be a document that the group create by splicing together recorded improvised moments. This style of collaborative scriptwriting is what McKean (2007: 512) refers to as composing a script. It is essentially a "recursive process" in which the "writing and the enactment of the writing lead to further revisions and discussion" etc. (McKean, 2007: 512). There are in fact a quite a number of ways that learners can generate script: cutting and pasting poetry, existing excerpts of plays, poems or prose with the group's own writing efforts, what Kempe (in McKean, 2007: 512) terms a "dramatic collage" has been a very effective way of generating script in my experience. I have found that by having learners dip into existing literature,

especially those learners who struggle to write scripts, gain an edgy and interesting quality. I have had learners in the GET (senior phase) model their scripts on Roald Dahl's Revolting Rhymes, to great effect. Planning in this regards is essential, if the artistic integrity of the devised script is a prerogative, the teacher must include tried and tested script generating strategies in the workbook during Stage One of the devising process.

The role of the director within the creative collective practice of devising may also be perceived as quite fluid, since the initial intention of this form of theatre was to break with the conventional hierarchical structures of play making, where the artistic vision of the play was the sole responsibility of the director. "At some point in the process", Oddey (1996: 26) concedes however, "a director or 'outside eye' is needed to edit or discard material, make technical decisions and lead the group overall". We see yet again that (as in the case of the scriptwriter) in defining the role and function of the director, the philosophy of the company should prevail. The necessity of defining roles within a group of learners in the secondary school context is imperative. Although the teacher may step in now and again to facilitate the devising processes during the last two stages, she may not be the director of their final performances. One or more group members must take on the role of director and designer in order to make provision for an 'outside' eye and to maintain the artistic-aesthetic integrity of the final performance.

It is this sharing of responsibilities or as Oddey (1996: 10) puts it, to "'muck in' or pull it together" in order to put 'the show on the road', that speaks to that educational value and the artistic merit of this form. It requires of learners to take responsibility for the design, the building, the setting up and the striking of the set and lights; the design and maintenance of the costumes; the writing of the script, the directing and publicity of the performance over and above being part of the actual performance itself. For this very reason, devised theatre is such a pedagogically rich practice – it fosters hard work, the realisation of the value of a positive work ethic, creativity, trust, and a sense of responsibility.

3.3.3 Honing artistic intuition

"The origin of the word intuition", Schonmann (2007: 588) points out, is derived from the Latin *intuitio*, which presupposes the act of contemplating. Consequently," she states "observation is inherent in intuition". The Dramatic Arts curriculum exposes and inadvertently grows learners' artistic intuition by guiding them to appreciate a range of theatrical styles/ and or genres by exposing them to related classical and contemporary texts. The drama teacher can further her learners appreciation of the theatrical arts by for instance taking them to the theatre, arts festivals, encouraging

them to view live-filmed productions by reputable theatre companies, or have them take part in school based theatre productions. The viewing or observation phase akin to growing the artistic intuition would then be followed by a contemplative phase, which would require of learners to reflect on the productions they observed or took part in by means of class discussions, report back sessions or reflective essay writing.

The creative collective processes of the devising practice elevates what is ostensibly a ‘third person’ experience of the theatre to that of a ‘first person’ experience. It provides a platform for learners to work on a project that grows out of a collective imagination. They experience first-hand how combined creative skills and effort create a space where anything can happen (Kempe, 2000: 64). When creating an original work through improvisation, discussion, debate and the workshopping of ideas – “what is created” slowly but surely “begins to take on a life of its own” (Kempe, 2000: 65). As Kempe (2000: 65) contends, the process “can seem quite magical”.

This magic may be the result of group creativity and/ or shared aesthetic perspectives. It can also be related to hard work and the striving for a collective goal. Heddon and Milling (2006: 10) describe this magic as a “moment of intuitive recognition in a group, as a group” which happens during improvisation: “Again and again companies report that they ‘just knew’ when an image was appropriate, or when they had hit upon an idea, movement, phrase or sequence that ‘felt right’”. Heddon and Milling relate this “inexplicable element of the practice” or ‘feeling’ to Foucault’s assertion that feelings are relatable to history, rather than instinctual responses:

We believe that feelings are immutable, but every sentiment particularly the noblest and most disinterested, has a history. We believe in the dull constancy of instinctual life and imagines that it continues to exert its force indiscriminately in the present as it did in the past. But a knowledge of history easily disintegrates this unity. (Foucault in Heddon & Milling, 2006: 10)

During the initial phases of the devising practice Grade 8 and 9 learners, for instance are less likely to know intuitively what works or does not. They would rely on what would seemingly be instinctual responses to the creative suggestions made by the teacher and/ or their peers. They have little or no experience of the theatre, they often struggle to create group cohesion, thus the generation of a shared creative vision can be quite difficult to attain. Yet, over time, as the devising process develops they can become more intuitively aware of each other with regards to mannerisms, behaviour patterns, physical abilities and performance skills, knowledge and work ethic.

It is evident that the more opportunities the drama teacher offers her learners to be involved in the devising practice, the more they can hone their intuitive response to their fellow collaborators, which in turn will support the development of the creative intuition of the group.

In the devising practice, everyone is vulnerable and paradoxically free to share his or her own ‘history’ in a creative collaborative environment. The practice not only gives to grow their artistic intuition, it also provides learners with the opportunity to actively “make sense of themselves within their own cultural and social context, investigating, integrating, and transforming their personal experiences, dreams, research, improvisation, and experimentation” (Oddey, 1996: 4).

3.4 Conclusion

As I have previously pointed out, it is imperative that the teacher plan the creative journey of devising practice very carefully, in order to support and guide her learners’ creative collaborative efforts, but also to serve as a safety net: the outcome of the devising process is in effect unknown. The final product will always be a ‘surprise’, but it should never be an unwelcome, unmindful, rash, or indifferent one. What the participants want to say with their devised piece; how and to whom they want to say it to, must always underscore the devising processes. Otherwise the process and projected learning and thinking outcomes can fall by the wayside.

When devising plays the learners become the directors, the scriptwriters, the actors and the designers of stage and costume. This is indeed theatre making from the ground up. The devising practice teaches learners to take ownership of the work and though it may be as all theatrical performances “temporal and transient”, ideally the process “should leave both participants and audience with something of value to be taken away” (Kempe, 2000: 64).

Finally – as was the case in the previous chapter – TABLE 3.1 indicates my understanding of how Devised Theatre strategies may improve my teacher practice and enhance my learners’ experiences. The final column will give evidence of the learner activities I included in the resource pack designed for this study (see Appendix A, titled Conservation: Devising an environmentally conscious performance piece), appropriate to the resulting themes.

TABLE 3.1 Application of literature explored: Devised Theatre

Teacher’s Role	Relevance to Classroom Praxis	Application to resources
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher designs devising task by: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners interaction in the devising process gives them the following learning opportunities: 	<p>Evidence on resources:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ setting a time frame for assessment opportunities; ➤ setting a time frame for process related activities as well as product related activities ➤ creating thoughtful group activities, scaffolded to help learners to progressively develop a cohesive group character which is built on respect and trust ➤ create reflection devices/ questions so that learners can cognitively gage their own actions and progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ they learn to manage their time in creative collaborative context and striving to reach a group goal ➤ they learn how to voice and negotiate their own perspectives (cultural, social and creative) in group context ➤ they are required to tests the boundaries of their own creativity and knowledge ➤ acquire the skill to realise what constitutes group character; to gage what is good for the group rather than the self ➤ they learn how to be more socially adept ➤ they have fun 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Page one of the workbook gives the time frame in which to complete both the process and product phases are clearly defined; every Improv Cycle has a set time limit. The lesson/time allocated to certain activities should guide the facilitator not restrict her however. ➤ See Class discussions: pp. 4 – 6. These discussions and relating reflective activities are designed to conscientise learners; make them aware of their own and their classmates’ perspectives. ➤ The Boal improvisation activities help learners to engage as “spect-actors”¹⁰ – observing and participating in the drama ➤ Most of the activities do induce the element of play and fun. I included Boal’s Columbian Hypnosis and the Seesaw game, as well as the extended versions to that effect; see also the Animalistics improvisation, pp. 9 - 10
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners are afforded the opportunity to devise a play by utilising a specific performance style, tailored to induce a specific audience response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See p. 5. Learners will utilise the performance style and methods evident in the play <i>The Horn of Sorrow</i> by Nicholas Ellenbogen

¹⁰ “‘Spect-actor’ is a Boal coinage to describe a member of the audience who takes part in the action in any way; the spect-actor is an active spectator, as opposed to the passivity normally associated with the role of audience member” (Adrian Jackson in Boal, 2002: xxvi).

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The teacher guides learners to devise a theatrical performance from its inception to reception• The teacher guides learners to understand the traditional hierarchical roles and structures that constitutes a theatre production	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners are afforded the opportunity for the hands-on exploration of the role of: actors; directors; scriptwriters; musicians; physical theatre performers; designers of sound, lighting, visual imaginary, costume and set.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All the improvisation exercises are chosen to help learners to become more comfortable as performers/actors.➤ See pp. 13 -14 for activities that requires of learners to allocate specific roles in the group.➤ Learners write monologues and dialogues for Presentation and Selection, see pp. 13 – 14
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Chapter 4: Improvisation as a devising strategy in the classroom

4.1 Introduction

At the inception of this chapter I would like to state that I look at improvisation as a dramatic process from the standpoint of an educator. I am deeply inspired by the practical guidance Augusto Boal gives in his *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (2002). I have a deep affinity for his approach to improvisation and acting exercises since it evens the playing field. Actors and non-actors (like my learners) alike may benefit from lessons to be learnt through his socially committed approach to theatre, which is based on what Govan et al. (2007:77) calls the “liberatory pedagogy”¹¹ of Paulo Freire. Boal specifically created activities that engages participants as “spect-actors” which requires of them to “deliberately and self-consciously” observe their own behaviour and interactions with participants within a group, as keenly as they observe the actions of other participants (Babbage, 2004: 42). This form of “participatory learning”, based on “human-human interactions” and negotiations holds true to the pedagogical principles that underpin a constructivist learning environment, where the learner is in the centre of his/ her own learning (Kenny & Wirth, 2009: 34, 36). I am deeply indebted to Keith Johnstone, a pioneer of improvisational theatre and Theatre Sports, who taught me that improvisation is a powerful educational tool and that I should not take myself so seriously.

I was introduced to Theatre Sports by my learners when I started teaching drama at my first IEB school – at age 36. The learners, who were ‘experts’, were understandably disappointed and frustrated with my lack of knowledge in this field, which had the helpful effect of spurring me on to learn how to play as many Theatre Sports games as possible. As I researched Keith Johnstone’s work I found myself leaning quite heavily on its methods, techniques and underpinning philosophy as agency for classroom improvisation. This enabled me to meet the curriculum requirements with regards to improvisation with more confidence.

The CAPS documents for the GET (senior phase) as well as the FET phase, respectively requires of drama learners the “development of classroom performances (through improvisation/playmaking processes) based on a specific stimulus” and to “use improvisation to develop characters, structure and scenes” in order to present a “polished improvisation” for evaluation and formal practical assessment purposes (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 9,15; RSA Department of Education,

¹¹ “Freire is particularly associated with furthering a revolutionary ‘pedagogy of the oppressed’ which encourages members of the community to reflect on their experiences as individuals and to use their ideas to imagine new ways of being and develop new forms of social action” (Govan et al., 2007: 77).

2011: 22). Before I start the discussion on theatrical improvisation and the pedagogical significance of this creative process, I would like to define the meaning of polished improvisation, since the curriculum requires this process as part of the workshop process.

4.2 Defining polished or fixed improvisation

Prendergast and Saxton (2013: 18-19) shed light on polished improvisation as a dramatic process by describing it as scenes that are “worked up” and therefore polished by repeated improvisation. The repetition of improvised scenes have the added benefit of helping participants to feel “secure in the choices that they will be making” (Prendergast & Saxton, 2013:19). Polishing improvised scenes can also ensure that participants, especially in the secondary school context, feel confident to share the scenes as part of a devising process.

In his book, *On Directing and Dramaturgy: Burning the House*, Eugenio Barba (2010: 29) discusses the use of fixed improvisation as a form of organic dramaturgy¹² which was an integral part of the training and techniques utilised by the actors at the Odin Theatre. This study does not suggest that the same expectations with regards to performance level and expertise required of professional actors should be applied to the learners at secondary school level. Yet, exploring Barba’s techniques, provides insight into the strategies a drama teacher may replicate in the classroom with regards to fixed or polished improvisation. He states:

One of my first requests to the actors was that they had to learn to repeat an improvisation. They had to be able to replicate their improvisation in the exact same variety of postures and dynamisms, introverted and extroverted attitudes, temporary halts, hesitations, accelerations and plurality of rhythms. It was easy to improvise, much harder to memorise the improvisation. (Barba, 2010: 28)

Barba is very specific about the detail required with regards to attitude, timing, rhythm and gesture actors need to replicate and build on during the process of polishing their improvisation. These key elements may certainly aid the facilitation when utilising polished improvisation as a devising strategy, as it is ultimately a “process with a product in mind” the outcome of which would entail “some kind of shared performance” (Prendergast & Saxton, 2013: 139).

Polished improvisations as part of the devised process may either be performed in the classroom in

¹² “Today I know that organic dramaturgy is the force which keeps the different components of a performance together, turning it into a sensorial experience. The organic dramaturgy is constituted by the orchestration of all the actors’ actions which are treated as dynamic and kinaesthetic signals. Its aim is to create a *theatre which dances*” (Barba, 2010: 24).

Stage Three and Four of the devising process; or in front of peers and teacher for the purpose of process and/or performance assessment. I have personally never presented a piece of polished improvisation as a final product to a broader audience on stage in order for formal evaluation to take place.

4.3 Defining theatrical improvisation

Over the years I have slowly but surely come to understand the significance of what I teach, especially with regard to the facilitation of improvisation. Toivanena (2011: 63) comes close to defining this understanding when she writes:

Drama and improvisation has both an emotional and intellectual impact on the participants. It holds up a mirror for us to examine ourselves and deepens our understanding of human motivation and behaviour. It broadens our perspective through stories that portray life from different points of view.

It is necessary to understand the vast scope of theatrical improvisation as a dramatic process in order for the drama teacher to apply it effectively as a devising strategy. I will begin this section of the chapter by defining what the practice entails in relation to the dramatic conventions it espouses which will lead to the underpinning principles that govern the practice. I will then go on to explore:

- the history of the practice with specific reference to how improvisation found its way into the classroom;
- the pedagogical significance of the creative processes – utilising the underpinning dramatic principles as guiding posts; and
- the teacher's role as facilitator of improvisation.

Pickering (2005: 92) infers that improvisation “probably has the widest sphere of application of any technique and concept derived from the theatre”. It informs and supports actor training curricula, business management training, general classroom practice in drama and education, and the strategies of professional devising practitioners. Furthermore improvisation is central to the techniques utilised in the psychodrama of Jacob Moreno and the forum theatre of Augusto Boal, to name but two practitioners in a long list of theatre gurus (Pickering, 2005: 92).

John Wright (in Oddey, 1996: 65) – artistic director of the Trestle Theatre in St Albans, England – compares the devising process to a planned improvisation. According to Kempe (2000: 68)

improvisation “is a fundamental element of devised work”. A notion that he shares with the theatre practitioners of devised theatre I researched for this study, and which he bases on Hodgson and Richards’ suggestion that “every improvisation is to some extent a play” (Kempe, 2000: 68).

Sawyer (2011: 11-12) writes that improvisation “is generally defined as a performance (music, theatre, or dance) in which the performers are not following a script or score, but are spontaneously creating their material as it is performed.” Improvisation as a theatrical construct may take on as many different formats as there are practitioners. However there are what could be considered certain agreed upon dramatic conventions and principles that define this form.

Dramatic conventions are what Pickering (2005: 78) refers to as a “tacit agreement between the performers and intended audience”; a creative contract of sorts that exists between the performers and their specific audience. For instance, the most simplistic of conventions presupposes that the actor pretend to be someone else, and the audience readily accepts it. Another example of a dramatic convention would entail the audience sitting passively in the auditorium or given “designated space”, watching and listening to the performers that are performing on the stage or given “designated space” (Pickering, 2005: 78). The audience agrees to accept these conventions, since they have come to expect it. Experimental theatre would often challenge these accepted conventions by for instance breaking the ‘fourth wall’ wherein an actor may step through an imagined wall created by a typical proscenium arched stage to engage directly with one or more audience members. The established dramatic conventions are governed, according to Pickering (2005: 78) by “fashion, theatre design, technology or cultural tradition [...] or even by the playwright or director for a particular play”.

There are a few basic dramatic conventions that group improvisation adheres to which give the process similar characteristics to that of a play performance (Hodgson and Richards in Kempe, 2000: 68). Pioneers in this field, such as Keith Johnstone and Viola Spolin, as well as scholars interested in this theatrical form concur on these conventions, whether improvisation happens on stage or on a rehearsal floor. I will briefly define these conventions and then discuss the resulting underpinning principles.

4.3.1 Dramatic conventions of improvisation

The first accepted convention of theatrical improvisation is that it is a group endeavour. Sawyer (2005: 7) writes that in improvisation the creativity of the group is “essentially collaborative” and that when defining improvisation the “key part of the explanation” should focus on the “social interaction and collaboration aspects” of this form.

The second accepted convention is that in improvisation there is no fixed script. Simon (in Fleischman, 1991: 90) posits that what is of importance, “is that the text is created by the performer at the moment of performance”. Exactly how and from where/what the participants draw on during improvisation has been a point of much consideration, but both Pickering (2005: 92) and Johnstone (1999: 73) note that the process of improvisation releases the imagination. Pickering (2005: 92) also draws attention to how improvisers may relate to text in its various forms:

Improvisation might include the ‘ad lib’ line within a fixed text, an extended extemporisation around a basic text or outline, the spontaneous invention of a piece of stage ‘business’ or the creation of a complete text through experimentation and role play.

The fact of the matter is that script/text is created in the moment, which is why improvisation lies at the heart of devising process – improvisation generates original and fresh material.

The third accepted convention is that there is always a given format which provides a framework in which the improvisations will occur. Even if, according to Fleischman (1991: 92) performers “in the process of improvising a scene in a workshop situation are unlikely to have a rigid preconceived structure for their improvisation”, they will nonetheless have possible themes and performance styles to draw on when creating characters, structure and/or narratives. Fleischman (1991: 92) also states: “Even when a structure has been imposed on an improvisation, it is probable that neither the performers nor the director know with any certainty where the improvisation will lead to”. This is reiterated by Sawyer (2006: 31) that states that no one can predict in advance what will happen in group improvisation. This can for instance be seen in the Theatre Sports performance, with its sets of games and rules to which performers adhere to, as well as the Theatre of the Oppressed techniques of Augusto Boal: the audience may know what to expect from the specific style of improvisation, but neither the performers nor the audience will be able to predict the outcome.

The fourth accepted convention is that improvisation, like a play performance, may take place in front of an audience. Different improvisation formats may necessitate different actor-audience relationships. In the Forum Theatre of Augusto Boal, audience members are called “spec-actors” and may step onto the stage and perform with the actors to change the outcome of a scene (Bolton, 2007: 55 - 56). In Keith Johnstone’s Theatre Sports audience members are free to give suggestions, advice and even commentary to the performers on stage – Theatre Sports was inspired by pro-wrestling for that very reason (Johnstone, 1999). Improvisation when employed on the rehearsal floor or in the drama classroom, however, does not *require* an audience. That being said, wherever group

improvisation takes place (and in which ever format) it will communicate a set of ideas and signs to one or more observers, who may interact with the performers during the creative process.

The fifth accepted dramatic convention of improvisation is that it requires of participants to take on a role in order to drive the narrative forward (Pickering, 2005: 92). It does not require actors per se, although professional and student actors would often utilise improvisation to hone their craft and there are of course professional acting companies that specialise in improvisational theatre. The non-specificity regarding the participants is why improvisation is such a useful performance tool to utilise in the drama classroom. Everyone – actors, non-actors, students, learners and amateurs – can become improvisers. This links directly to what I consider to be the first principle that underpin this practice.

4.3.2 Principles underpinning improvisation

I draw the first principle that underpins improvisation from Spolin's (1963: 2) adage: "Everyone can act. Everyone can improvise. Anyone who wishes to can play in the theatre and learn to become 'stage worthy'".

Play is an especially significant characteristic of the devising practice. Play – whether it be "imaginary play, role play, representational play, physical play" – is so appealing to devisers because it puts emphasis on "process and improvisation rather than textual analysis and technique" (Govan et al., 2007: 32); thus play implies that the participants are free to have fun, to experiment during the creative process of devising.

The second principle that underpins the process of improvisation, is that the participants are engaged in the act of learning; a very special kind of autodidactic process that Spolin (1963: 2) alludes to when she states:

We learn through experience and experiencing, and no one teaches anyone anything. This is as true for the infant moving from kicking to crawling to walking as it is for the scientist with his equations. If the environment permits it, anyone can learn whatever he chooses to learn; and if the individual permits it, the environment will teach him everything it has to teach. "Talent" or "lack of talent" have little to do with it.

Not only is the individual gaining knowledge through experience – he/she is learning through active participation in a collaborative, creative manner.

The final principle that underpins improvisation, and the effective and spontaneous creative journey

that participants undertake whether they are professionals or novices, is that of space. Here I refer to the performance space or environment participants find themselves in when partaking in the process of improvisation. How the participant relates to this space can have creative implications as well as emotional implications for the participant. This is especially relevant to improvisation in an educational context. If the space created by the drama teacher and learners alike does not foster trust, creative experimentation, positive collaboration and play, learning will be impeded.

It has to be noted though that the dramatic conventions and principles of improvisation are not necessarily limited to the ones I have put forward; these conventions and principles speak only to my review of selected literature.

From this literature review, coupled with my own experience with improvisation in the classroom context, it becomes clear why the practice has “become both an educational and a therapeutic tool” of prolific relevance and scope (Pickering, 2005: 93). In section 4.5 of this chapter I will explore how the underpinning principles of improvisation are relevant to devising in an educational context. However, in order to utilize theatrical improvisation in the drama classroom and to facilitate the diverse skills and behaviors and imbedded theatrical processes successfully, it is useful to trace the journey of this practice from its beginnings to how and why it entered the domain of the classroom.

4.4 Improvisation: an historical overview of the use of improvisation

Improvisation, in essence, is the spontaneous release of human creativity. It is this quality that has made improvisation so useful to all manners of creative artistic expression and, as Pickering (2005: 91) suggests, “is almost certainly older than recognisable forms of drama”. Boal (2006: 67) seems to shout from the rafters: “To improvise is to live! Life is an eternal improvisation, or it is no life at all!”

Gavin Bolton’s article, “A History of Drama Education: In Search for Substance” (2007), discusses the concept of improvised performance, and deliberates on the historical significance of this dramatic process in relation to performance practice as applied in education:

Improvised entertainment began, long before Classical Greek times, with the Shaman and the Clown. The Shaman offered his or her audiences a glimpse of the “other” world or the dark side of the unconscious, while the Clown offered childish, scatological fantasies, or outrageous, satirical commentary. (Bolton, 2007: 75)

It is also believed that “epics in many cultures were probably presented initially as improvised narratives” of which seminal works like *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad* by the Greek poet Homer, are

expels of (Pickering, 2005: 91; Hodgson & Richards in Young & Curtis, 2008). According to Pickering (2005: 91) Greek and Roman comedy, as well as the Renaissance commedia dell'arte were in fact built around the improvisational skills of actors. Young and Curtis (2008) reiterate this notion when stating that in Renaissance Italy improvised entertainment turned professional in the form of commedia dell'arte¹³.

The art of improvisation was taken seriously by influential theatre practitioners like Vsevolod Meyerhold, Jacques Copeau and Bertolt Brecht; the last mentioned who experimented with specifically the physical comedic practice of commedia dell'arte or *lazzo* in rehearsal “as a valid training exercise” as well as devising tool (Bolton, 2007: 51; Pickering, 2005: 91).

It is also considered that much of our modern interest in improvisation can be attributed to Constantin Stanislavsky (Pickering, 2005: 92). Building on improvisation techniques of Stanislavski that aimed to, “put the actor in touch with the life of the character”, Lee Strasberg, who created the Method school of acting shifted the focus from the inner life of the characters to the actors themselves (Bolton, 2007: 52). He would employ improvisation as a process “directed towards helping actors to meet their own selves and to break down personal blockages” (Bolton, 2007: 52). Improvisation is a useful process when preparing for a character. Actors, Pickering (2005: 92) notes, would utilise this process “to research their characters in minute detail and re-enact incidents and imagined meetings outside the scope of the play’s text”.

Bolton (2007: 52) suggests that improvisation found its way into the educational contexts of schools when professional theatre (in America) started to “overlap” with therapy, supported by the psychodramatic theory and practice of Moreno and later, by the personal growth literature of such thinkers as Carl Rogers (1961) and Abraham Maslow (1954). Bolton (2007: 52) contends that it was their work that resulted in improvisation to be “associated in the minds of both theatre directors and some drama teachers in schools with ‘finding the authentic self’. In many schools throughout the western world, drama workshops acquired this therapeutic flavour”.

The creative play aspects of theatrical improvisation would also find its way into the classroom via a similarly circuitous route. The *little theatre* movement that were initiated by the work of Maurice Brown and his wife Ellen Van Volkenberg in America coincided with the experimental work of Meyerhold and Copeau on the Continent. Viola Spolin, who became the leading authority on the use

¹³ An essentially comedic form where set scenarios were improvised on by a troupe of professional actors, bringing stories to life with the help of “a handful of stock characters (*zannis*) who expressed their character traits through the use of masks, absurd physicalisations, and obscene gestures” (Salerno in Young & Curtis, 2008).

of Theatre Games, was in fact the student of Neva L. Boyd (who lived nearby the Little Theatre in Chicago), who was responsible for setting up the Chicago Training School for Playground Workers as early as 1911. According to Bolton (2007: 51-52),

Boyd was both a practitioner and an academic sociologist promoting the use of Play in teaching children and adults [...] Thus began the link with Chicago Little Theatre and long before Spolin's 1963 publication, *Improvisation for Theatre*, the "Chicago style" genre of theatre performance entered the school system.

Unfortunately Spolin's catch phrase for improvisation, "playing the game", may have influenced the use of this practice in some schools for its comedic value as the catch phrase may in fact be construed as "playing for laughs" (Bolton, 2007: 52). The fact of the matter is that learners want to have fun. That does not suggest that they cannot learn valuable skills whilst playing. In the United Kingdom, Pickering (2005: 95) writes, "Peter Slade's work as Drama Adviser in Birmingham in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War led to his articulating a concept of an improvisatory art-form that he called 'child drama'". Slade advocated "a type of play that he categorised as 'personal' or 'projected'". His belief in the educational value of dramatic play centred on "role play, devising, ritual and a physicalisation of ideas and emotions" have influenced the work of many drama in education practitioners, who "followed his approach in using improvisation as a tool for learning and personal growth" (Pickering, 2005: 95).

In his book *Impro for Storytellers* (1999), Keith Johnstone describes the skills participants of Theatre Sports – a form of improvisational entertainment often perceived as an exclusively comedic form – may hone in practice.

He writes that Theatre Sports can:

- alleviate the universal fear of being stared at;
- turn 'dull' people into 'brilliant' people (i.e. 'negative' people into 'positive' people);
- improve interpersonal skills and encourage a life-long study of human interaction;
- improve 'functioning' in all areas (as it says on the snake-oil bottles);
- develop story-telling skills (these are more important than most people realize);
- familiarize the student with the bones of theatre as well as the surface. (Johnstone, 1999:24)

According to Bolton what "started in the 1960s as 'hysterically funny' (Johnstone in Bolton, 2007: 52) improvised explorations setting out to free the imaginations of the actors, gradually developed

into public demonstrations in various London colleges and then, with a group of actors”. Keith Johnstone established the International Theatre Sports Institute across the world and, as Bolton (2007: 52) states, “many schools found it irresistible”. The educational value of spontaneous creation, the implied freeing up the imagination and having fun whilst doing so, specific to the subject drama, may very well be taken quite seriously.

How improvisation has come to be an accepted strategy of devised theatre, especially in the United Kingdom has much to do with the work and legacy of Joan Littlewood in the 1950s. Joan Littlewood had in all probability also indirectly influenced the ‘workshop’ (a term synonymous with her work) and improvisation processes in the South African secondary school curriculum for Drama. It is common knowledge that the late Barney Simon of the Market Theatre in Johannesburg worked at her Theatre Workshop as a young man (Kruger, 1999: 160; Colman, 2014: 1). Pickering (2005: 93) describes Joan Littlewood’s avant-garde approach to theatre making as follows:

During the late 1950s and early 1960s she worked with a group of actors on plays by Brendan Behan, Shelagh Delaney and Bernard Kopps, using improvisation to achieve a sense of spontaneity and risk-taking, to deepen and enrich understanding of the context of the material and to develop the script (of the work of very inexperienced writers). These approaches culminated in employing “documentary drama” techniques, Pierrot comic business, Brechtian staging, episodic structure, and alienation techniques in *O What a Lovely War*, scripted by Charles Chiltern but devised in considerable degree through improvisation.

During the second half of the twentieth century improvisation started to gain traction as a devising strategy. Pickering (2005: 93) notes, the “idea that a text could be created from a variety of sources through improvisation became established as a way of working for a large number of small-scale theatre companies”. He proposes that this approach to ‘playwriting’ were influenced by “a growing awareness of the value of oral history and the potential of simple documentary sources: diaries, court records, press reports etc.” (Pickering, 2005: 93).

In the following section of this chapter I will endeavour to explore the methods, mind-set and outcomes the practice of improvisation as a devising strategy holds for the teacher and learner alike – in order to ensure that all participants benefit from the process.

To quote Dorothy Heathcote out of context, “How shall we set about solving this problem?” (Bolton, 2007: 53).

4.5 Applying the principles of improvisation

Section 4.3 of the study utilised a set number of principles to define the process of improvisation. In the following section I will utilise the underpinning principles of improvisation to focus the discussion on the use of improvisation as a devising strategy in an educational context.

4.5.1 We grow as we play

The teaching methodology and learning strategies employed by the drama teacher are quite different to traditional teaching and learning methods, since drama is at its core a practical subject. Drama relates to theatre which “involves a hands-on, experiential form of learning where the learner is intellectually, emotionally, and physically steeped in narratives involving different individuals set in diverse scenarios” (Rao, online 2008).

In the drama classroom learners have the opportunity to immerse themselves in diverse and interesting narratives. They do not only read and analyse plays, characters, themes and narratives; they have the opportunity to experience the emotional and physical journeys of characters, first-hand. When learners devise scenes or plays, they have the singular opportunity to utilise improvisation to create and explore characters, narratives and structure. They regularly engage with what Nussbaum (in Rao, online 2008) refers to as the “narrative imagination”, which is a prerequisite to creating characters, especially when learners improvise characters in a devising process. The utilisation of the narrative imagination, is a multi-layered, process driven exercise. Roa (online 2008) states that it requires

the ability to be able to think what it must be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be able to listen to other people’s stories, and to sympathize with others’ emotions, wishes, and desires.

In the drama classroom, learners are not required to be excellent improvisers or actors. They are however guided to listen more carefully, and with empathy. When they step into a role during improvisation, they will ideally learn over time do so with the intention to understand what drives their character. That understanding will feed the narrative, structure and the performance itself. This argument is given credence by Prendergast and Saxton’s (2013: 61) notion that role-play is more about being than it is about doing.

For the purpose of this study I am going to use the word role-play to signify the performance practice learners engage in whilst utilising improvisation as a devising strategy. My personal view on the value

and purpose of the subject Dramatic Arts compels my professional focus as drama teacher which presupposes that the honing of my learners' performance or acting skills are secondary to the life skills and attitudes that I believe the subject engenders; my view agrees to a large extent with a section of the official Dramatic Arts subject description for Grade 10 – 12 which states that Dramatic Arts aims to equip “learners with crucial life skills such as confidence, self-esteem, creativity, communication skills, empathy, self-discipline, critical and creative thinking, leadership and collaborative teamwork which will benefit the individual in any field or future interest” (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 8).

The word role-play as a dramatic process defies a simple description. Simon (2007: 17) does contend though that the “defining element of role-play is role and deciding whose point of view is to be adopted is one of the crucial planning decisions”. Learners may feel free depending on their age or skill-level to which extent they may immerse themselves in a role/ character. Morgan and Saxton (in Simon, 2007: 17) distinguishes between “five different levels of role” that learners can engage with, i.e.:

- dramatic playing (students are themselves in a fictional context)
- mantle of the expert (the students' status is as 'the ones who know')
- role-playing (students sustain a point of view not necessarily their own)
- characterization (students adopt attributes of a specific person)
- acting (students adopt an external appearance, voice movement, etc. in order to create a role for an audience).

Improvisation can be a singularly liberating activity, especially if the learners know that all they are required to do is to try their hand at the given improvisation activities. The onus is on the learner which levels of role he/she wants to employ in order to serve the given improvisation activity. When learners engage on a regular basis with role-play, skill levels are honed and practised: “Students gradually become more conscious of the role level they are using, and more able to manipulate role-playing to create their own collaborative stories” (Simons, 2007: 18).

Taking on a role, even on the very first level, affords learners the opportunity to transcend the mundaneness of the traditional classroom context. It affords learners to play at being someone or something else. Booth and Thornley-Hall (in Gallagher, 2001: 118) write that not only does role-play let learners escape “the narrow confines of their own worlds and gives them entry into new forms of existence”, the activity also helps them to make sense of “their own relationships to this fictional life,

the 'me in the role' and the 'role in me'".

Characters or roles created in improvisation games tend to be more fleeting and often built on stereotypes. When working on polished improvisation, a deeper level of experimentation will occur naturally, since the learners are afforded more opportunity to develop the character he/she created. Facilitation opportunities such as class discussion and the collective creative process on the rehearsal floor, assist learners to discover and reflect on the "me in the role" and the "role in me". This exploration does not happen in a vacuum. There is always a *we* (or the rest of the group) that are creating with *you*. Improvisation is first and foremost a collaborative process. Learners can always count on the group as well as the facilitator to intervene, guide, support and give advice. Role-play in the context of improvisation is all about exploration and discovery and play.

Augusto Boal's (in Roa, online 2008) claim that "theatre is the most natural form of learning" gives credence to this assumption. Roa (online 2008) points out that "children grow up learning through role-play". She bases her assumption on the fact that children make up stories and songs, imitate friends, teachers and family – all in the name of play. This has an outward ripple effect in how children relate with society, Roa (2008) notes, as "becoming characters and engaging in narrative, children learn about structures of society and the rules of their community".

Role-play – as the word suggests – invites the acts of play, play acting and/or experimentation with or *play* at becoming different roles or characters as part of the dramatic process. This *play* aspect should be an indicator of the spirit in which the dramatic process can and maybe should take place in the drama classroom. The word *play* sanctions *fun*. Prendergast and Saxton (2013: 61) write that role-play allows participants to shed the "nonfictional world we live in every day" and step into "a fictional world within which" participants can transform into a myriad different roles, from people to animals, aliens or even machines! Laughter, at their own and each other's' antics, has a liberating effect.

Of course the pedagogical aim of this dramatic process presupposes the investigation of and the gaining of a deeper understanding of the characters or the roles learners take on during the process of polished improvisation. It is however the *play* and the having *fun* and the experimentation with characters outside of the mundane everyday lives of the average learner that allows the drama teacher to use role and play as a door to further exploration. Govan et al. (2007: 31) point out that "the spontaneous act of play is an effective way for performers to access their unconscious minds and their innate and childlike creativity". This principle can be related to Dorothy Heathcote's teaching strategy as suggested by Eriksson (2009: 128) which amounts to enabling the ordinary to become fabulous.

Play becomes an enormously rich and powerful tool in accessing the imagination. When learners are having fun, they access their creativity without realising it. Govan, et al. (2007: 32) writes that it is the inherent creativity engendered by play that has great appeal for devisors even on a professional level, because “different forms of play – imaginary play, role play, representational play and physical play [...] emphasise process and improvisation rather than textual analysis and technique”.

4.5.2 The nature and spirit of play (in the drama classroom)

The nature and spirit of play speaks to a more positive and accepting inter-subjective dramatic action and collaboration between learners. According to Dunn (2011: 29):

For a growing number of writers from within the field of drama and beyond, child-structured, socio-dramatic play is being recognized as a key form of dramatic improvisation, which Sawyer (2006), in particular, believes leads to the development of “group genius” or “collaborative creativity”.

This concept of socio-dramatic play presupposes that learners will bring their own worlds and their own experiences into play, because it is from these ‘worlds’ that they draw their ideas and creativity from. In the drama classroom, in contrast with the ‘real’ world, the learners are in charge and in control of the creative outcomes, which can be both empowering and liberating as Booth and Thorley-Hall (in Gallagher 2001: 118), suggests: “When children participate in drama, they are in charge of building the dramatic experience through their actions and words. They become the drama, discovering ideas and directions that will surprise and change them”.

Improvisation also has the ability to change personal perspectives. In the drama class it is not unheard of that learners get the opportunity to play roles and “engage in narratives that may be, in strict developmental terms, beyond their years” as Gallagher’s research highlights. She suggests a democratic spirit underpin all activities in the drama class, where learners receive “equal treatment, treatment as individuals”; this spirit enables learners to grow in their understanding of “their world and each-other” (Gallagher, 2001: 118).

When polishing improvisations for devising, learners have the opportunity to discuss, negotiate and reflect on the characters and the motivations of the characters/roles they have created. Improvisation then has the potential to not only surprise learners with their own creativity, the practice has the capacity to liberate through what Herbert Marcuse (in Rao, online 2008) called the expression of the “uncolonized imagination”.

Thus it seems evident that improvisation is much more than just a strategy to move the fictional action forward or to create characters, scene and structure. It can actively change learner's perspectives and thinking.

Sawyer (in De Zutter, 2011: 31) focusses his argument for the educational value of improvisation on how the practice enables and "develops new, more sophisticated ways of thinking". When learners actively engage with "unfamiliar ideas", it assists them and challenges them to "generate and explore new possibilities for their own thought". In this way he suggest learning becomes a "creative act defined by the learner's improvisational construction of new understanding" (Sawyer in De Zutter, 2011: 31).

The importance of Sawyer's suggestion that the practice of improvisation may stimulate a shift of perspectives that may lead to new insights into the self and the world learners inhabit, serve to emphasise the need for effective facilitation. Every learner's creative journey from novice to capable and competent improviser can only be supported and guided effectively if the facilitator understands the scope, the range, the educational value, the principles, conventions, values, skills and habits that are inherent to the process of improvisation. Role-play is in fact serious play.

4.5.3 Permitting learning to happen

The second principle that underpins the practice of improvisation, is the principle of learning. Spolin (1963: 2) points out that we only learn through experience and then only if we "permit" ourselves to engage in the experience: when the experience changes you, learning would have occurred. When engaging in improvisation, whether the learner consciously permits it or not, learning will 'happen' spontaneously.

Berk and Trieber (2009: 38) points out that more than 30 years of experience and previous research with improvisational exercises, particularly in the business and management training domain, demonstrates how the process of improvisation satisfies Rhem's (1995) four criteria for "deep learning". The pedagogical significance inherent to improvisation seems evident in Berk and Trieber's (2009: 38) summary of Rhem's criteria for deep learning:

- (1) motivational context, the intrinsic desire to know, make choices, and take ownership and responsibility for seeking a solution or making the right decision quickly;
- (2) learner activity, the experiential, inductive discovery in collaboration with other team members to synthesize, problem solve, or create knowledge;
- (3) interaction with others, with the spontaneity,

intuition, quick thinking, brainstorming, trust-building, risk-taking, role-playing, and rapid decision making of improvisational dynamics; and (4) a well-structured knowledge base, where content is reshaped, synthesized, critiqued, and even created to demonstrate understanding and comprehension as well as analytical and evaluative skills.

It is interesting to note that deep learning may manifest without the help or ‘interference’ of the teacher. The practice in effect seems to release the teacher from almost all instructional control. The onus is on the participants to create meaning and find solutions to problems since the participants share the responsibility for the product – often in real-time (Magerko, et al., 2009: 1). Classroom praxis, therefore, becomes almost exclusively learner centred; a key element of the values purported by the constructivist approach conducive to learner-centred learning and classroom practice as unpacked by Bonk and Cunningham (1998: 27).

During improvisation, deep learning cannot, however, manifest without effective communication. The process of improvisation compels learners to find ways and means to communicate with empathy in order to negotiate meaning effectively and to encourage creativity. Dialogue can create what Gadamer (in Sæbø, 2011: 25) refers to as “an existential meeting where each participant must dare to put his or her understanding ‘at stake’”. Therefore it is important that learners acquire the skill to utilise dialogue as Sæbø (2011: 25) points out that is “characterised by an openness that helps each participant to be freely inspired by others to discuss their own and each other’s ideas”.

The underpinning philosophy of all Theatre Sports hold that the offering of ideas and creative suggestions during improvisation, falls in the realm of the imagination, and that the imagination should be free from any constraints, especially the constraints of judgement, of the self and the other. The fear of judgement may induce learners not to speak up or to not offer ideas and probably worst of all, to reject the creative suggestions or offers made by other participants of the improvisation¹⁴.

For deep learning to occur it requires of learner activity to be “an experiential, inductive discovery in collaboration with other team members to synthesize, problem solve, or create knowledge” in a positive and accepting manner (Berk & Trieber, 2009: 38). Learners can be incredibly hard on themselves and each other. Levels of creativity in learners differ, the teacher needs to establish that to be different is good enough; we all grow at a different pace! Here the facilitator may well learn from Johnstone’s (1999: 73) bag of tricks when he writes:

¹⁴ Theatre Sports and Long-Form improvisation strategies teaches learners to unconditionally accept and build on creative suggestions and endowments during improvisations (Johnstone, 1999; Hauck, 2012).

The best trick I know for releasing the imagination is to persuade the students that their imaginations have nothing to do with them [...] Where do ideas come from, anyway? Why should I say "I thought of it", or "I thought of an idea", as if my creativity was something more than the acceptance of gifts from an unknown source? Ultimately students have to accept that the imagination is the true self (as William Blake knew), but it's not easy to grasp this nettle.

Firstly, if learners and teachers alike are able to “grasp this nettle” to quote Johnstone, it would be ideal if this philosophy could infuse all collaborative activities in the classroom, where listening and idea sharing take place: from class discussions to group improvisations. In this way learners may be actively guided and encouraged to not worry about their short comings as improvisers, but to revel in the enjoyment of the process as well as the skill and ideas proposed by other learners.

I have found that when you break down the process of improvisation and teach learners the very basic strategies, they develop and grow surprisingly well in the practice. I will explain and expand on some of these strategies in more detail in Chapter 5 of this study.

Secondly, when the group activity, process and outcome become more important than grappling with the self in the situation, true and inspiring synthesis is sure to occur.

The pedagogical significance of the practice of improvisation becomes clear when one considers the auxiliary learning outcomes implicit in the practice as suggested by Godamer and Sæbø and Johnstone. Berk and Trieber (2009: 30) describes the skills and behaviours this essentially learner centred practice hone, succinctly, when he writes:

Research evidence demonstrates that (improvisation) can promote spontaneity, intuition, interactivity, inductive discovery, attentive listening, nonverbal communication, ad-libbing, role-playing, risk-taking, team building, creativity, and critical thinking. These features are all about the students.

When deep learning occurs it seems inevitable that the skills and behaviours acquired may be transferable to domains outside the artistic domain of the drama classroom: “Scholars have theorized, that developing an ability to improvise may be effective for enacting a range of tasks, for example, interpreting the environment, creating emergent strategies, fostering teamwork, undertaking psychological risk, listening, and communicating” (Gagnon, et al., 2012: 304).

The skills and behaviours learners acquire as a result of playing improvisational games and participating in improvisational exercises as discussed above are the outcomes of 3 key learning

processes – which I will explain more fully in Chapter 5 – that relate and inform teaching methodology and classroom practise. They are:

- Embodied learning processes
- Cognitive learning processes
- Collaborative learning processes.

4.5.4 Space

The third principle that underpins the practice of improvisation, is the principle of space. If the environment permits it, anyone can learn whatever he chooses to learn; and if the individual permits it, the environment will teach him everything it has to teach (Spolin, 1963: 2). In the next section of this chapter, I will explore how the drama classroom can become a space that enriches and fosters the imagination.

4.5.4.1 The classroom as forum for creative opportunities¹⁵

The collaborative nature of improvisational theatre, “arguably the most collaborative of all the arts” and the leaning outcomes, skills, values and behaviours this practice engenders may very well be the key that will unlock the traditional classroom space. It may very well transform the classroom into a space where every learner takes expressive creative behaviour, risk taking, empathic listening, compassion and having fun for granted (Thomson in Gagnon, et al., 2012: 305).

The drama classroom should be a space where learners come to realise that their input and opinions are valued, since in a creative environment all opinions are relevant, not always accepted at face value, but discussed, analysed and debated in the spirit of collaborative thinking, learning and sharing. In improvisational theatre “the outcome is wholly shared. Every participant or actor is responsible for every other participant; success relies on actors being highly attentive and responsive to each other” (Gagnon, et al., 2012: 305). There are three core skills and behaviours according to Gagnon, et al. (2007: 306-307) that underpin the practice of improvisation, namely: the act of “whole listening”; “the willingness ‘to be in the moment’” and “focussing on the other”. These skills should become habits if developed, modelled and fostered by the drama teacher and learners alike, and consequently infuse the character of the classroom on order for it to be a ‘safe’ space for learners to express

¹⁵ This phrase is quoted out of context. It is a phrase used by Berk when he discusses artist-teacher partnerships in the United Kingdom. “Partnerships,” he writes, “have become a delivery model in education, which offers a forum for creative opportunities” (Berk, 2009: 52).

themselves freely. I will pay particular attention to being “in the moment” in the following subsection of this chapter that focusses on risk.

In order to facilitate a safe space the drama teacher needs to become an effective mediator of listening. According to Gagnon, et al. (2012: 307), knowing how to listen is the basis of creative collaborative practice on the part of the learners as well as the facilitator. All participants should experience being listened to on equal terms, with focus and compassion. In collaborative creative practice such as group improvisation “whole listening” is key (Gagnon, et al., 2012: 307). Whole listening espouses the idea that when you listen whilst improvising you are constantly “opening space for others’ ideas” (Hatch in Gagnon, et al., 2012: 307).

This idea is developed further by Johnstone (in Prendergast & Saxton: 2013, 18) who specifically draws the attention to what happens in “the space between” performers. In Theatre Sports accepting and giving offers inevitably become part of the performer’s collection of habits and skills:

Accepting offers means that a person in role in an improvisation is open to suggestions given by a partner or partners, or by participants. Being open is saying “Yes!” to an offer, not judging it or rejecting it but immediately and as Barrett suggests “generatively” by incorporating the offer into the story that is being built and explored. (Prendergast & Saxton, 2013: 18)

The act of “whole listening” presupposes that a positive attitude generates positive behaviour, positive action and reaction leaves no room for judgement or negativity. This in turn engenders an openness among participants as they learn to “fully comprehend the meanings and intentions of others, based on actions as well as words” (Barrett in Gagnon, et al., 2012: 306).

Being mindful of “the space between performers” entails “focusing on the other” , in other words being mindful of the other, forgetting about the needs of the self and rather focussing outward, effectively shutting out personal and every day (often negative) “noise” that only impede the creative processes (Barrett in Gagnon, et al., 2012: 307). It is not a far-reaching assumption that the space that affords learners the opportunity to practice and hone their *whole listening skills* may undergo the same transformation it engenders.

If the educational values inherent to ‘whole listening’ and ‘focussing on the other’ are effectively instilled it should permeate the classroom and thus the creative collaborative process of theatrical improvisation and classroom praxis in general. “If the process is good,” Johnstone (1999: 339) writes, “I assume that the end-product will be good”. If Theatre Sports players demonstrate the following

skills and behaviours, he describes them as “working well” together:

- They're taking care of each other and being altered by each other
- They're daring, mischievous, humble and courageous
- The work feels 'natural', 'effortless' and 'obvious'
- No one is trying to be 'original' or to think up 'clever' ideas
- They're being themselves, rather than fleeing from self-revelation
- (They) care about the values expressed in the work. (Johnstone, 1999: 339 – 340)

It is clear from Keith Johnstone’s ideal, stipulated above, that the habits and skills engendered by improvisation activities should create thoughtful learners who listen, focus and respond to their classmates’ ideas and opinions. These habits do not grow over night; it needs to be fostered, facilitated and monitored by the teacher and learners alike. Brooks and Brooks (1999: 86) describe this notion succinctly when they write, “Creativity and risk taking are not attributes that can be turned on and off. Both need nurturing, encouragement, and support”. In the following chapter of this study I will explore Keith Johnstone’s description of the group character that ensures a well-executed improvisation activity or game reflects in relation to classroom praxis.

4.5.4.2 The risk factor

In their book, *In Search for Understanding: The Case for Constructivist Classrooms*, Brooks and Brooks (1999: 10) advocates a classroom environment “organized so that student-to-student interaction is encouraged, cooperation is valued, assignments and materials are interdisciplinary, and learners’ freedom to chase their own ideas is abundant.” In this type of classroom environment these scholars suggest that “students are more likely to take risks and approach assignments with a willingness to accept challenges to their current understandings” (Brooks & Brooks, 1999: 10).

The constructivist philosophy advocated by Brooks and Brooks is a wonderful ideal, the execution of this ideal with regards to classroom praxis can be quite complex when one considers the intense personal and creative journeys learners undertake in the course of improvisation that leads to devised theatre.

The drama teacher has to model whole listening, and the focus on the other, and engender “empathetic competence” (Gagnon, et al., 2012: 307) very carefully and systematically, because improvisation suggest performance. No matter where you turn in the drama classroom you will always have an ‘audience’ present, whether it constitute peers or teachers – there is nowhere to hide. Furthermore

improvisation as a devising strategy is ultimately a “process with a product in mind” the outcome of which would entail “some kind of shared performance” (Prendergast & Saxton, 2013: 139). In the drama classroom the creative risks and initiatives that learners undertake are more often than not subject to assessment and evaluation, which implies academic risk and pressure. It seems evident from the curriculum requirements that learners have to be confident and secure enough as improvisers and performers to present an often very personal journey as a finished product to a live audience of peers and parents. The risk factor that underpins improvisation for devising can often be quite difficult to negotiate when learner’s differences in competence/skill, age and attitude cloud the creative output of a group.

The range of learner competence with regards to improvisation has to be taken into account when considering risk; which may range from the fearful and insecure learner who are convinced that they cannot act to the super confident, incredibly talented performer. Age plays a less definitive role. I have found the younger the learner (between the ages 13 to 15) the less they are hampered by self-doubt and inhibitions. Though, you do tend to struggle more with a negative attitude towards drama and performance at this age. A negative attitude to drama and improvisation is a battle all drama teachers face at some time or another; luckily however, the underpinning values and creative opportunities embedded in the practice more often than not draws even the most negative learner in. Competence, age and attitude will always present itself in a varying range of potential risk inducing factors, and the drama teacher has to be consistently aware of these variables in order to reduce risk.

In the South African secondary school context the drama teacher has to be skilled enough to negotiate the practice of improvisation with Grade 10 -12 learners who has chosen the subject and are aware of the personal risk and exposure inherent to the subject. The drama teacher also needs to be able to introduce this practice to Grade 8 learners who, when they arrive in the drama classroom for the first time, trusts no-one, and potentially know only the learners in their ‘group’/clique. The three meditative qualities of the constructivist teaching approach pinpointed by Brooks and Brooks (1999: 86), if applied consistently, may help the drama teacher to effectively facilitate the practice of improvisation. They suggest that the teacher should focus her practice on “nurturing, encouragement, and support”.

Johnstone inadvertently provides an effective starting point the drama teacher can utilise in order to soothe learners with regards to the practice of improvisation and performance, which he refers to as a “trick”. This trick, as previously stated, encourages learners to believe that their creativity and ideas, “have nothing to do with them” (Johnstone, 1999: 73). “Believe that your ideas are nothing to do with

‘you’”, Keith Johnstone (199:194) encourages performers, “treat them as gifts that are showered on you, and you’ll be as effortlessly creative as when you’re listening to a story”.

The first step in performing this “trick” would entail that the teacher guides learners to make a decision to distance themselves from who they are in “real life” in order to be completely “in the moment” when creating a character or scene. The onus is on the learner to make that choice to be “in the moment”, or to adopt the attitude of “willingness ‘to be in the moment’”:

To be in the moment an individual must allow him or herself to switch from habitual to active thinking [...] Being in the moment allows an individual to release her or himself from thoughts of the future or thoughts of the past and fully address the “here and now”. (Gagnon, et al., 2007: 306)

The second step would be to take Johnstone’s (1999: 73) advice literally when he encourages improvisers to distance themselves or to release the self from the burden to be funny, creative or talented. This would allow for the creative will of the group to establish itself.

Learners may even start to revel in this “unknown source” (Johnstone, 1999: 73) when they let “the moment” take over and when their creative focus is directed outwards. When learners tap into the creativity and the imagination of the other, “meanings are being made and not given”, according to Booth and Thornley-Hall (in Gallagher, 2001: 118) and learners “will find responses and language powers that are unexpected, engendered by the collective drive for group meaning”. It is this learning outcome of improvisation that trumps all, in my opinion. Herein lies the magic of the performance arts: the surprise and sheer enjoyment learners can experience when group collaboration in process and performance exceed all expectations.

“Whether improvisation be utilised as a training exercise or a form of entertainment created on the spot,” Fisher-Lichte (2002: 132) cautions however, “extensive pre-preparation is required”. It is the responsibility of the drama teacher to select specific improvisation activities that will serve the creative outcomes of the tasks she sets her learners. More so if improvisation activities are utilised for devising.

4.6 Conclusion

Finally – as was the case in the previous chapter – TABLE 4.1 indicates my understanding of how the creative processes of improvisation are relevant to my teacher practice and the experience of my learners. The final column will give evidence of the learner activities I included in the resource pack

designed for this study (see Appendix A, titled “Conservation: Devising an environmentally conscious performance piece”), appropriate to the resulting themes.

The multi-faceted role of the teacher with regards to the practice of improvisation for devising is far too complex to summarise in one table. The next chapter of the study will focus exclusively on the role of the teacher in this context.

TABLE 4.1 Application of literature explored: Improvisation in the classroom

Teacher’s role	Relevance to Classroom Praxis	Application to resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher develops the learners understanding of the following key concepts of improvisation: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher facilitates discussions and explain the principles governing a constructivist learning environment – why and how the practice of improvisation puts the learner in the centre of his or her own learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner’s awareness about the values and principles of improvisations is developed gradually and in practice throughout the school year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creative collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Engaging in improvisation helps learners to realise the creative power inherent to group creativity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All the performance generating activities, include in this Workbook, pp. 7 -11 utilises creative collaboration. ➤ Learners are encouraged to reflect on their role and function in the group. (see pp. 14)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Spontaneity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The teacher gives learners a grounding in the joys of acting in the moment drawing from their own reservoirs of creativity, cultural and social experiences; in realisation that when all the participants act in the moment without forethought, they can relax and enjoy each other’s ideas and creativity. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Empathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The teacher gives learners a grounding in how/why improvisation requires 	

	<p>“whole listening” and why “opening spaces” for each other’s’ ideas is a key ingredient for positive and creative improvisations (Hatch in Gagnon, et al., 2012: 307).</p>	
<p>➤ “Spect-actor”</p>	<p>➤ The teacher gives learners a grounding in understanding their role as ‘spect-actors’: the process of improvisation engages learners in the dual process of observing their own and their group members’ actions and to drive the narrative forward as a performer; learners are empowered by their ability to influence and/ or change the outcome of the improvisation.</p>	<p>➤ The Boal inspired activities on coupled with the reflection questions on pp. 7 – 9; 10-13 helps learners to engage with the process of becoming ‘spect-actors’.</p>
<p>➤ Play</p>	<p>➤ The teacher advocates and models the positive attributes of play. Improvisation governed by the principles of play makes the activities “feel 'natural', 'effortless' and 'obvious’”; in play learner can just be “themselves” (Johnstone, 1999: 339 - 340).</p>	
<p>➤ Giving and accepting offers</p>	<p>➤ The teacher grounds learners in giving offers and accepting offers; to say “Yes and”... (Prendergast & Saxton, 2013: 18); thus learners engage in the positive experience of allowing a narrative to flow spontaneously.</p> <p>➤ This principle of improvisation aslo serves to permiate the learning environment with conviviality.</p>	
<p>➤ Role</p>	<p>➤ The teacher grounds learners in the levels of</p>	<p>➤ All the improvisation activities in the workbook</p>

	<p>roles; they can choose to which level they feel comfortable to perform.</p>	<p>allow for learners to participate on the level on which they feel comfortable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Not one of the activities is set in the style of realism; Stanislavskian characterisation is never necessary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The teacher, consciously and reflectively creates a safe environment where improvisation and risk-taking may flourish. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The teacher creates a safe environment by modelling her facilitation on the principles of improvisation alluded to in this study: she treats all her learners as “artists” and thus as learners deserving of respect (see Bolton, 1985: 154); she advocates the values of learning through play and she practices “whole listening”. ➤ The teacher uses every technique available to her to ground learners in the knowledge of how their individual risk-taking will benefit the creative output of the group as well as serve the group dynamic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The learners are made aware of the exact performance techniques and outcomes each improvisation requires. ➤ The first two improvisation activities start with a whole class exercise. See pp. 7 & 9. The thinking behind the “circle” activities that form the first step of these improvisations is that learners feel more comfortable to explore when they see every single member of the class do the same; it serves as a platform of inspiration – learners are inspired by each other’s confidence, creativity and spontaneity. ➤ All the improvisation activities are scaffolded. By scaffolding the activities into different steps or phases should serve to build the individual learner’s confidence and understanding of what is expected of them.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The final two improvisation activities (see pp. 10 & 11) have to be preceded by class discussions. The teacher may employ one or two groups to show the rest of the class exactly how the improve works.➤ Recording (see p. 7) all the improvisation activities provide a safety net of sorts to the learners. It helps to keep the less enthusiastic group members on their toes and the recordings may serve as a platform for the final devised performance.
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Chapter 5: The role of the teacher as facilitator of the creative collaborative learning strategies

She creates the narrative of the space, a space that should aim to be welcoming and free, a “creative space that is not under surveillance and where creative conflict is welcomed and critical dialogue is embodied (as opposed to merely verbalized)” (Gallagher in Rao, online 2008)

5.1 Introduction

When the drama teacher facilitates the devising strategies of improvisation and workshop¹⁶ she has to be as creative, spontaneous and giving as she expects her learners to be. Fran Rees’s (2005: 3) description of the process of facilitation speaks to its complexities, she calls it both a “science and an art” that requires a set of specific skills and methods that enable the facilitator to read people with a sensitive eye and to lead them to perform at their peak. The classroom space is the domain of the drama teacher, her attitude, will and capacity to induce and enhance the creative processes that govern the devising process will drive the depth of the devising outcomes.

In this chapter I will explore methods that may assist the praxis of implementing devising strategies in the drama classroom. I have used the term praxis freely throughout this study, but would like to reiterate at this point the express suitability of the term in describing the nature and character of the teaching practice specific to the drama classroom. Praxis is a term developed by Paulo Freire which “claims that at the heart of sound education is an ability to help teachers and their learners reflect and act upon their world, and through that process transform it into something more equitable and worthwhile” (Taylor, 2003: 6). Taylor (2003: 1) writes:

Drama praxis refers to the manipulation of theatre form by educational leaders to help participants act, reflect interplay between three elements – people, passion and platform – as leaders and participants strive towards aesthetic understanding.

The term praxis speaks to the principle of teacher accountability towards her own practice, as well as professional growth as she guides her learners through dramatic processes that may ultimately change the way in which they view their worlds. The weight of living out this responsibility on the teacher ultimately informed the overarching themes that have emerged from this research and the application thereof during the duration of this study. I will utilise the emergent themes on teacher praxis as sub-

¹⁶ For the purpose of this study workshop is defined as the combined strategies of improvisation and polished improvisation that takes place on the rehearsal floor as learners practically explore their ideas. The teacher is rarely part of this process.

headings of the respective sections of this chapter. They are:

- acquiring the “mantle of the expert”
- embracing the “multidimensional”¹⁷ role of the teacher
- the process determines the product

The implication of the research is that it may serve classroom praxis when devising with young learners. I would like to state here that the last theme, based on the assumption that the quality of the processes determines the product, will be afforded its own chapter. The following chapter will explain and clarify my processes and teaching praxis in relation to the design and implementation of learner and teacher resources in the Grade 8 Workbook: “Devising an Environmentally Conscious Performance Piece”.

It became clear during the writing of this penultimate chapter of the study that my professional values as teacher – which I stipulated in the first chapter of this study (see TABLE 1.4) – are inextricably linked to the emergent themes that this study has produced.

5.2 Acquiring the “Mantle of the Expert”

Traditionally the ‘mantle of the expert’ is a system of teaching which places learners in the role of experts and thus in the centre of their own learning; a constructivist concept that challenges the conventional teacher-learner roles and relationships (Heathcote & Herbert in Booth, 2012: 8; Brooks & Brooks, 1999: 10; Bonk & Cunningham, 1998:27). I believe this concept provides a useful metaphor with which I can marry my professional values to the emerging theory of this study. The process of the acquisition of this ‘mantle’ is ongoing, thoughtful and reflective. Heathcote (in Aitkin, 2013: 35) states that the ‘mantle’ is not a garment to be gifted by another, but a quality that grows from within:

Mantle is not a cloak by which a person is recognised. This is no garment to cover. I use it as a quality: of leadership, carrying standards of behaviour, morality, responsibility, ethics and the spiritual basis of all action. The mantle embodies the standards I ascribe to. It grows by usage, not garment stitching.

For the purpose of this study I would like to look at this metaphor from an alternative perspective. It

¹⁷ Moonsamy (2014: 51) writes: “The teacher’s role includes: mediator of learning; assessor of learning; interpreter and designer of materials and programmes; specialist; leader, administrator and manager; support provider; scholar and researcher”.

is my supposition that the drama teacher who are actively searching for ways and means to improve her practice can benefit greatly from this metaphor. In as much as this system puts the child in the centre of their own learning, so may the teacher put herself the centre of her own learning when she reflects on her teaching praxis. This includes her *leadership* style and skills; her *standards of behaviour*; her level of accountability in relation to her *responsibilities*; *ethics, morals* and *spiritual basis*; and subject knowledge as a teacher.

The process of giving away your power or traditional role as a teacher and thus empowering your pupils to become the centre of their own learning, is an extremely complex and fluid process as Heathcote herself attests to; her wording suggests that the teacher can in effect never stop finding new ways and means to give away her power (Aitkin, 2013: 35; 41). In agreement with this concept Burnard (2011: 52) reflects that “[t]eaching is a subtle and complex art, and successful teachers, like artists, view their work as a continuing process of reflection and learning”. I for instance still struggle to give up my power in trying to control the creative outcomes of a workshop or improvisation process, especially if a group is struggling.

A method utilised by Heathcote, that will assist the teacher’s conscious transition from being what can be termed a traditional teacher to that of a self-styled ‘Joker’ figure (a concept which I will fully explain shortly), is to accept learners’ behaviours with the same consideration as you would the behaviours of adults or fellow artists (Bolton, 1985: 154; Booth, 2012: 8). This consideration is based on the assumption that when engaging in creative group collaborations “students behave as adults with responsibilities, who must live with the consequences of their decisions” (Booth, 2012: 8). Treating learners as budding artists was central to Heathcote’s philosophy and practice. Yet as Bolton maintains, pupils had to work to deserve this privilege (Bolton, 1985: 154; Booth, 2012: 8). When learners realise that the drama teacher attaches this much value to their actions, learning and creative processes when they collaborate, a gradual transition of ‘power’ from the teacher to the pupil can occur thoughtfully and positively. The drama teacher does not however withdraw her ‘power’ summarily, she never just leaves her pupils up to their own devices – that would be irresponsible and detrimental to any creative collaborative classroom praxis.

Heathcote gives useful guidelines that should govern the behaviour and attitude of the teacher as facilitator of creative and collaborative activities. For the purpose of this study I will apply her advice to the Stage Four and Five (see Chapter 3, section 3.2) of the devising process. During these stages, learners work on their performance pieces, in groups, without the constant supervision of the teacher. In the workshop phase learners are at their most vulnerable, since they are working on their own, in

groups, polishing improvisations, editing and writing their scripts, finalising design choices etc. The teacher must always keep her eye on all the groups and the particular behaviour of the individual members during this phase of the devising process – and intervene when necessary. Heathcote (in Booth, 2012: 8) writes that the “experienced teacher” facilitates the interaction of learners in a collaborative contexts by first categorising their behaviour and then by acting accordingly. I bullet the modes of suggested behaviour and actions for clarity.

The teacher will first identify:

- those who sit back,
- those who imitate,
- those who observe, and
- those who lead or initiate the dramatic moments

The teacher will then facilitate the interaction by:

- drawing in those on the outside,
- moderating the dominant voices,
- and bringing the narrative to a fuller experience (Booth, 2012: 8)

It is the assumption of this study that in order to become an “experienced teacher” or to acquire the ‘mantle’ of an ‘expert’ facilitator devising strategies, the drama teacher must equip and empower herself with a clear understanding of the learning processes embedded in the practice. Heathcote’s (in Booth, 2012: 8) suggestions for instance of “drawing in those on the outside” and “moderating the dominant voices”, and “bringing the narrative to a fuller experience” can require quite complex pedagogical manoeuvres.

The underpinning learning process of the devising practice is that of collective collaboration and I have identified a further two key learning processes, namely: embodied learning, and cognitive learning processes, which are really just an extension and expansion of the way a drama teacher can approach devising. It is nearly impossible to distinguish between these processes because they share the same underlying pedagogical principles. In this section I will endeavour to unpack these learning process in relation to how the understanding of the embedded educational principles may influence and guide teacher praxis during devising.

Before tackling the complexities of the learning processes pupils engage with during devising, I

would like to elaborate on Augusto Boal's specification of the character of the 'Joker', that traditionally 'leads' improvisations in the *Theatre of the Oppressed* performance context. I believe the nature of the Joker's practice and influence sums up the way in which the drama teacher may view her role as facilitator of devising strategies. Boal (2002: 245) states:

The Joker is not the president of a conference, he or she is not the custodian of the truth; the Joker's job is simply to try to ensure that those who know a little more get the chance to explain it, and that those who dare a little, dare a little more and show what they are capable of.

The role of the Joker as defined by Boal provides an apt cue for the first route marker/guidance sign for the drama teacher which may inform her praxis in the facilitation of the creative collaborative nature of the learning processes inherent to devising, i.e. the 'zone of proximal development' (alluded to in chapter 2).

5.2.1 Creative collaboration

5.2.1.1 Route Marker 1: The 'zone of proximal development'

The first time I heard about the 'zone of proximal development' was about three years ago at a conference about critical thinking held in Knysna. I have been teaching for more years that I would like to admit without knowing anything about Vygotsky. Whatever I had required of my learners to do in the context of what was known in 'my day' as *group work*, had absolutely nothing to do with the principles of Social Constructivism. Group work in my class consisted of the following: I divided the class in groups (often willy-nilly), I explained the task/activity I wanted them to complete, and I gave them a time limit in which the task had to be completed. If they begged me to work with their friends, I allowed it; sometimes I would consider placing learners with contrasting skills and work ethic in one group to allow for the 'weaker' learner to benefit from the 'stronger' learner. I took this action mainly because I thought I was benefiting the 'weaker' learners' progress – but that was it. My facilitation of the group activities was certainly not careless, but I now realise that I had no idea what I was doing.

The 'zone of proximal development' I have come to realise should be the corner stone of all creative collaborative processes. Rudimental knowledge of this route marker may inform classroom praxis in this regards on quite a number of levels.

The philosophical position Vygotsky proposes for the teacher in a constructivist classroom with his

‘zone of proximal development’ is not at all that far removed from the principles that Boal wants his Joker to base his/ her action on when facilitating a *Theatre of the Oppressed* performance.

Vygotsky (1978: 86) simplifies this notion of the ‘zone of proximal development’ or ZPD when he writes: “It is the distance between the actual developmental level (of a learner) as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”.

By proposing this “essential theory of learning” Vygotsky suggests, that collaborative creative practices, such as workshop and improvisation, allow pupils to teach and learn from each other, since when learners engage in social and creative interaction it “awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers” (Vygotsky, 1978: 90).

When the drama teacher allows her choices (with regards to classroom praxis during the devising process) to be governed by the pedagogical potential of the ZPD – or what Wells (2004: 137) calls a “semiotic apprenticeship” – she is actively working towards positive and effective learner-centred praxis. In this context ostensibly simple choices with regards to which learners she should group together, which creative collaborative activities would best serve the learners’ skills and needs, as well as that of the desired learning outcomes, become more thoughtful and considered. The drama teacher then does not give away her responsibility; she bestows responsibility respectfully. Like Boal’s Joker she ensures “that those who know a little more get the chance to explain it, and that those who dare a little, dare a little more and show what they are capable of” (Boal, 2002: 245).

The arts, according to Smyth and Stevenson (2003: 12), give learners the unique opportunity to connect “through structured collaboration, learning, and creation multiple worlds into a cohesive, active, participatory environment where they become agents of their own change”. The role of the teacher is thus not superfluous, she is ultimately responsible for the structuring of the groups, the learning activities and the classroom as learning environment, without which effective creative collaboration between learners cannot take place.

5.2.1.2 Route Marker 2: Becoming the Agent of Your Own Change

The second route marker that may assist classroom praxis in the context of collaborative learning, I would like to base loosely on Smyth and Stevenson’s (2003: 12) above assumption. The onus is on the drama teacher to ground her learners in the knowledge that creative collaboration empowers them

to be the agents of their own change, growth and learning.

The collaborative creative nature of devised theatre, Govan et al. (2007) remind us, is ultimately what empowers every participant. Devised theatre “is often characterised by its emphasis on improvisation, on ensemble acting, on collective decision-making and skills-sharing within a non-hierarchical company structure”, thus every participant, including the teacher, has an equal voice (Govan et al, 2007: 47). The shared responsibility this principle of devising implies, serves as an incentive to be the agent of your “own change”: to be the best you can be, to grow, work, develop and learn, in order to serve the bigger whole.

How then does the drama teacher help her learners to realise their ‘equal voice’? How does she help her pupils to attain and maintain a positive group character? How does she guide group members to take responsibility for each other, based on mutual understanding and empathy? I would like to approach these questions from the perspective of the three principles that underpin the philosophical framework of collaborative and cooperative learning in the field of pedagogy proposed by Berk and Trieber (2009: 35 – 36). They are:

1. Learning is a naturally occurring social act and active and constructive process;
2. there must be respect for all students and their diversity of backgrounds, intelligences, learning styles, experiences, and aspirations; and
3. the potential exists for all students to achieve academic success.

I firmly believe that sharing the above principles in a thoughtful class discussion may help the learners to realise exactly where their teacher is coming from and why creative collaboration is good for them. If learners are made mindful of these principles it could potentially underpin their attitude to their classmates and their approach to the devising strategies they collaborate in. In the drama class most collaborative processes are also performance based, which in fact serves to deepen the ‘dialogue’ that learners engage in. Participating in devising strategies arguably gives learners a crash course in effective communication and negotiation tactics. Communication develops into what Nicholson (2000: 4) calls the “physical languages” embedded in dramatic processes which ultimately enables learners to “interpret and question the particular mix of personal, social, artistic and cultural narratives which they carry with them”. (I will extend this argument in the section 5.2.2 Embodied learning processes.)

All devising strategies, e.g. reaction to stimuli, discussions, debates, improvisations, selection of scenes, editing and rehearsals are based on a collaborative and intellectual sharing of ideas. Therefore

the drama teacher must ensure that each learner may feel free and be willing to contribute ideas, while at the same time remaining open to the possibility that their ideas may become an impulse for the development of a collective idea, or may be revised and turned around, or even rejected in the inter-subjective interaction of the group” (Sæbø, 2011:25). Devising strategies thus presupposes what Gadamer in Sæbø (2011: 25) calls “an existential meeting where each participant must dare to put his or her understanding ‘at stake’”.

The teacher must guide learners to view their own contributions through an objective lens. “The critical and interpretive nature of the arts,” Smyth and Stevenson (2003: 12) point out, “make them an ideal place both to hold multiple perspectives at arm’s length for observation and to embrace them as a source of creative strength and power”. Learners who are guided to engage with each other in this ‘existential meeting place’ in a positive, objective and empathetic manner may soon realise how empowering the sharing and testing of their ideas and perspective might be, and that collaborating in this manner can only serve their own learning and growth.

5.2.1.3 Route Marker 3: Accountability

The third route marker that may assist classroom praxis in the context of collaborative learning is the principle of accountability, which starts with the teacher. Learners will not feel secure in sharing their opinions and perspectives freely, or to collaborate in devising strategies with enthusiasm, if the teacher is apathetic to their ideas, opinions and/or collaborations. As previously stated, the teacher is just as much a part of the devising process as the learners. To sit back and leave the learners to their own devices, is irresponsible. She risks not only the quality of the collaborative learning experiences, but also the quality of the knowledge acquisition processes of the individual learner.

The greatest hindrance to a successful devising process is when an individual learner negates his/ her “accountability” (Johnson et al. in Berk & Trieber, 2009: 35 - 36). This often occurs during the workshop phase when the learners work in their groups without the direct assistance of the teacher. Knowing about and engaging with the pedagogical principles of collaborative learning strategies should hopefully encourage the drama teacher to take informed action rather only relying on old habits. This was certainly the case with me. Reprimanding and scolding the perceived culprit, will only intensify his/ her apathy, frustration and/or anger.

I have realised since the inception of this study that if the teacher is positive, encouraging, passionate and enthusiastic about the devising process, she may influence her pupils to feel the same. Till a few years ago I have never facilitated any group activities with the very specific choice of phrases that I

now speak freely in my classroom:

- “Remember that this is a collaborative effort; every opinion is valid”
- “Listen to each other – every idea opens a door to a next creative opportunity”
- “Of course you are struggling; you are learning to negotiate – do so with a positive attitude and you will reap the benefits”
- “Be open”
- “Be brave”
- “Take risks – there are no mistakes”
- “Always say ‘yes’...Never ever say ‘no’”
- “Be kind to one another...”

As I read these phrases I realise that they are not of my own making and I tip my hat not only to Vygotsky, but also to Tina Fey, (YouTube, 2016) Amy Poehler (YouTube, 2016) and Ellen DeGeneres who always ends her talk show with the inimitable line, “Be kind to one another.”

Encouraging learners to actively engage with their peers in open and free dialogue during the creative stages of the devising process will support the individual learner to test his/ her changing perspectives in order to create the opportunity for the Freirean concept of “critical transivity” (Heany, 1995: 3). It is a stage in learner (and teacher) development, Heany (1995: 3) points out, characterised by a:

- depth in the interpretation of problems, by testing one's own findings
- openness to revision and reconstruction, by the attempt to avoid distortion when perceiving problems and to avoid preconceived notions when analysing them,
- by rejecting passivity, by the practice of dialogue rather than polemics,
- by receptivity to the new without rejecting the old.

“The individual and collective aspects in the learning process,” Sæbø (2011: 23) points out, “will always be present at the same time in the classroom in drama in education.” The social and cultural contexts of the drama teacher and respective learners, the experiences that shaped their “experiences and perspectives” represents the individual aspect, “while the collective aspect is represented by the community that the students and the teacher create together” (Sæbø, 2011:23). (I will offer more insight into this argument under the heading, The Multidimensional Role of the Teacher, with specific

reference to Intersubjectivity¹⁸). Thus the onus is on the drama teacher to be accountable for generating a sense of community. She does this by cultivating a learning environment where learners are excited about the challenge of taking charge of their own and each other's learning; where learners' perspectives are open to change; where learners can lean on the teacher for support and guidance.

5.2.2 Embodied Learning Processes

5.2.2.1 Route Marker 1: The Art of Empathy

The second of the three dominant learning processes that a teacher may explore in order to become an effective facilitator of devising, is that of embodied learning. Bourdieu (in Downey, 2010: 24) sums up the relevance of this learning process when he writes:

The body believes in what it plays at: it weeps if it mimes grief. It does not represent what it performs, it does not memorize the past, it enacts the past, bringing it back to life. What is 'learned by body' is not something that one has, like knowledge that can be brandished, but something that one is.

The first route marker for the drama teacher that may inform her praxis in the facilitation of the embodied learning processes, is that this form of learning hones in learners the art of empathy.

Improvisation in the context of the devising practice asks of learners to embody a role in order to create characters which may then be utilised to create scenarios, scenes, plots and/or scripts. The physical processes of creating a character may in fact serve a larger social and educational purpose since it hones the skill of creative and embodied enquiry into people, their contexts and perspectives, often beyond the scope of the learner's immediate social environment and experience. In her discussion of Katherine Gallagher's educational practice, Rao (online 2008) points out that in the drama classroom learners are afforded the opportunity "to play roles and engage in narratives that may be, in strict developmental terms, beyond their years".

During the process of improvisation for devising, learners are required to first imagine or model a character; as the devising process progresses learners immerse themselves more and more in the physical aspects of their characters which are reliant on the context, subtext, age and goals of the

¹⁸ "Verenikina (2003) asserts that intersubjectivity is considered as a key step in the process of internalization as the adult gradually removes the assistance and transfers responsibility to the child" (in Shabani, et al., 2010: 238).

characters. The way the characters walk, move, shape their gestures and interact with other characters and their environment give learners a complete realisation of an imagined, yet lived otherness. Gallagher (in Rao, online 2008) writes that when learners utilise dramatic imagination to inform characterisation they “draw on the conscious and subconscious to envision new possibilities”. No wonder that within the context of drama and education, drama, as Nicholson (2000: 2) suggests, “is in itself often regarded as an educative medium,” since when learners create characters or enact their imagined roles they are in effect “creating, inventing, symbolizing and representing values, ideas and feelings” that may differ radically from their own.

The embodied learning processes inherent to drama pedagogy allows for the honing, realizing and reinforcement through practice¹⁹ of what Nussbaum calls the *narrative imagination*²⁰.

Firstly, improvisation and the resulting creation of well-rounded characters allow for learners to practise “the ability to be able to think what it must be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be able to listen to other people’s stories, and to sympathize with others’ emotions, wishes, and desires” (Rao, online 2008). But as McKean (2007: 505) points out, “exploration of character (also) involves close observation and reflection on one’s own lived experiences as well as of those around us”.

Mills and Brown (in Sinclair & Grindrod, 1995: 3) posit that “[a]ctive engagement in intellectual and artistic activities is one way in which we can re-evaluate our perceived reality, and our collective habits of thinking and acting”. Active engagement presupposes embodied learning, where participants physically participate in creative processes, test their ideas and assumptions while exposing the mind and the body “to previously unimaginable ideas which challenge [...] values, leading to personal growth, lifelong learning and change” (Mills & Brown in Sinclair & Grindrod, 1995: 3).

The potential to shift personal, social and even political perspectives and the habits they engender in learners in a physically experiential way, is the key feature that distinguishes drama praxis from other artistic activities. In the context of devised theatre, this is especially relevant since the form offers the performer “the chance to explore and express personal politics or beliefs in the formation and shaping

¹⁹ In contrast to the “innate capacities” man as a species is endowed with, e.g. “perceptual, cognitive, and motor – that engage us with the world”; “‘arts and virtues’ are not endowed, but realized and reinforced in practice” (Marchant, 2010:1).

²⁰ “Nussbaum calls for a focus on the ‘narrative imagination’, or the ability to be able to think what it must be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be able to listen to other people’s stories, and to sympathize with others’ emotions, wishes, and desires (Rao, online 2008: 5-6).

of the piece”, they are working on (Oddey, 1996: 11). Learners who have had no first-hand experience of for instance, racism, poverty, greed and injustice, have no real idea of the myriad emotions and thoughts these prejudicial habits generate. In the drama classroom they may very well have the opportunity to experience a semblance of what it ‘feels’ like to be subjected to or to afflict unfair or unjust and prejudicial treatment. The art of empathy is thus honed in practise and it may change how learners perceive the world.

5.2.2.2 Route Marker 2: The practise of multi-modal languages

The second route marker that may inform and support teacher praxis in the context of devising is the practise of multi-modal languages.

The physical and emotional realisation through enactment of hitherto mostly abstract perceptions, opinions, judgements and ideas raised and debated in class discussion, speak to the multi-modal languages of drama praxis that learners (with the guidance of teachers) learn to negotiate in the drama classroom.

Nicholson (2000: 3) writes: “the multi-modal languages of drama, is a symbolic system which is part of the collective fabric of social interaction, cultural exchange and dialogue; it is a living, vibrant and creative mode of communication and thought, which changes with use”.

When engaging in the multi-modal languages inherent to dramatic processes learners are introduced to and allowed to hone the skills of non-verbal and physical communication, they learn to interact via a symbolic system particular to dramatic processes where “the gaps and silences, the stillness and the movement speak as loudly as words” (Nicholson, 2000: 4).

The social scientist, Cuddy, gave quite an important and revealing address at a TED Talks conference in 2012, with regards to the powerful complexities of non-verbal human interaction, titled: *Your body language shapes who you are*. She states in her address that social scientists “have spent a lot of time looking at the effects of our body language, or other people's body language, on judgments”. It is inherent to human nature to “make sweeping judgments and inferences from body language”. These sweeping judgements, often made on the spur of the moment, have extraordinary influence in that it has the potential to “predict really meaningful life outcomes like who we hire or promote, who we ask out on a date” (Cuddy, 2012).

During the practice of devising learners create characters from the ground up; they engage with and learn how to utilise gestures and movement in order to create a character whose non-verbal language

sanctions specific, predetermined judgement from other characters as well as the audience. In a sense they learn how to manipulate the “narrative imagination” of an audience (Rao, 2008: 5-6). When learners experiment with characterisation they in effect learn how to utilise specific gestures and physical interactions with props, set and/or other characters to draw a certain response from the audience. Learners gain invaluable experience about people and why they are who they are when they practise how to successfully navigate the subjective as well as objective evaluation of non-verbal communication during the devising process. Devising teaches learners how to communicate the personality and inner-life of characters utilising gesture and movement, gaps, silences and stillness. In this manner, their perspectives may shift and empathy may grow since they gain first-hand experience of lives lived.

According to Pickering (2005: 85), “[g]esture is one of the principal non-verbal codes of communication available to the performer. It encompasses all movements of the arms or hands in relation to the stance and other parts of the body and may be mimetic – calling attention to what it copies; highly stylised; or an ‘echo’ gesture – reinforcing a point made in speech”. Gesture is specifically employed by the actor to “encode meanings for the audience” (Pickering, 2005: 67). Movement and gesture may very well encode meaning for the performer on a physiological and psychological level, or what Amy Cuddy (2012) refers to as the “other audience”: “We tend to forget the other audience that's influenced by our nonverbals, and that's ourselves. We are also influenced by our nonverbals, our thoughts and our feelings and our physiology”.

In her address Cuddy (2012) speaks about how she, along with her research partner from Berkeley, Dana Carney, set out to discover if “our nonverbals govern how we think and feel about ourselves”, or (as she alternatively puts it) if “our bodies, change our minds”. Their research proved quite conclusively that “nonverbals do govern how we think and feel about ourselves, so it's not just others, but it's also ourselves” (Cuddy, 2012). By changing or adjusting movement and gesture the levels of what Cuddy (2012) calls the “two key hormones: testosterone, which is the dominance hormone, and cortisol, which is the stress hormone”, adjusts accordingly. When movement and gestures suggest power and dominance your cortisol levels drop and you testosterone levels rises. When your gestures and movement implies submission and powerlessness, the cortisol levels will increase and the testosterone secretion diminish (Cuddy, 2012).

The significance of Cuddy and Carney’s research findings for the purpose of this study, is that they have effectively proved Atticus Finch is right. When drama pupils take on the role of a character and change and adjust their movements and gestures to suggest the inner life and subtext of this character,

not only may it change their personal perspective on this type of character, as in Scout Finch's case, it may in fact influence their 'mind's'/ brain's physiology.

Prendergast and Saxton (2013) writes very succinctly about how thought processes are influenced directly by the experiences the body accumulates over time. This serves the processes inherent to dramatic practice in the classroom as it guides behaviour especially during the course of spontaneous dramaturgy. "Our bodies and our minds work together, in concert, to explore issues, themes, ideas and situations through improvised role play and other process-based activities" (Prendergast & Saxton, 2013: 5). Rambusch and Ziemke's (2005: 1807) contention that the body "as the basis of human thought, is critically involved in processes such as decision making and problem solving as mental simulations of actions are not only an integral part of human thinking but more importantly also are tightly linked to sensorimotor activity", certainly supports Prendergast and Saxton's views.

When drama learners actively engage in improvising and workshopping characters, by utilising gesture and movement, they are in fact provided with "an important tool in developing and understanding abstract concepts and knowledge" (Rambusch & Ziemke, 2005: 1807). Rambusch and Ziemke (2005: 1807) continue by stating: "Human thought cannot be reduced to symbol manipulation or social exchange, but is inextricably intertwined with perception and action". Thus it can be said that devising strategies offers learners the opportunity to actively engage with Freire's maxim wherein they can "transition from seeing themselves as objects (unconscious and acted upon by others) to subjects (capable of self-conscious action)" within the group itself (Babbage, 2004: 20).

When learners construct their own meaning by engaging with performance strategies to tackle socially relevant, moral and historical issues, they develop and grow their capacity to deal with their own life-world²¹ with greater thought and insight.

5.2.3 Cognitive Learning Processes

5.2.3.1 Route Marker 1: Exploring Thinking

The cognitive learning processes are intrinsically entwined with the collaborative and embodied learning processes that have guided the discussion up to this point.

In order for learners to tap into the educational value of the utilisation of improvisation (and

²¹According to the phenomenological tradition, in everyday organizational life, such activities as work, learning, innovation, communication, negotiation, conflict over goals and their interpretation, and history are co-present in practice. They are part of human existence of the "human life-world" (Nicolini, et al., n.d.: 9).

workshop) in the classroom it may be a good idea for the drama teacher to intentionally make her learners aware of the explicit cognitive learning processes imbedded in improvised performance practice. Moonsamy (2014: 50) points out that “it is now believed that intelligence is modifiable and that the brain itself can change”. Therefore it is imperative “that classrooms become places where thinking is not taken for granted, but actively imagined” (Moonsamy, 2014: 50).

According to Bodner (2015: 1), “[k]nowledge is constructed in the mind of the learner” (2015: 1). Like the construction of a building, the building of knowledge can and should be a scaffolded and considered process. Learners “‘construct’ the world around (them) and explore concepts within (their) minds and with others”. The mental operations this require “are not simple logical” Hyerle (2014: 163) points out, it “require creative, interpretive and reflective thinking”. Yet no sustained and mindful reflection on the acquisition and *construction* of knowledge can take place if learners are not given the appropriate vocabulary to do so. It is the responsibility of the teacher to help learners through “intentional and explicit mediation²²” to acquire and utilise the appropriate language that “supports the acquisition of cognitive skills and the creation of metacognitive awareness in students” (Moonsamy, 2014: 49). Moonsamy (2014: 49) describes the role of the teacher in a thinking classroom as follows:

In a thinking classroom the teacher does everything that any good teacher does in addition:

- talks about the process of thinking and learning and encourages students to do so
- teaches students a vocabulary of thinking words so that they can speak about their thinking more precisely
- systematically mediates and gives practice in the metacognitive skills that will help the students use their cognitive skills in different contexts
- motivates students to be fascinated by their own thinking processes and confident that they can develop and improve them.

A class discussion on the nature of the constructivist and social constructivist approaches to learning that underpin the teaching methodology as well as teaching material that the drama teacher present to learners, may be a good starting point in engaging learners with the quality of the thinking and learning that should take place in the constructivist classroom.

²² The mediational teaching style entails: “to support students as they develop thinking skills and become able to think about their own thinking” (Haywood in Moonsamy, 2014: 49).

When learners are made mindful of the learning theories that underpin their classwork, especially pertaining to collaborative performance processes, they may realise the benefits of being cognisant on their own processes within the social context and collective learning processes of the drama classroom. “To learn meaningfully”, Bodner (2015: 12) writes, “individuals must choose to relate new knowledge to relevant concepts and propositions they already know”. If learning implies conscious choices made by each individual, giving learners a lens to consider their own processes of acquiring knowledge will empower them.

The following summary (see TABLE 5.1) illustrates how the underlying assumptions of constructivism impact the role of the teacher and that of the learner. This summary, when shared with learners, may serve as a possible introduction to the general aims of classroom praxis concerning all dramatic activity in the drama room. It may give learners a clear understanding of the processes and strategies that the teacher will utilise to empower them. Learning is described by Brown et al. (in Rambusch & Ziemke, 2005: 1804) “as a process in which observation, guidance, and practice are essential elements, and which is characterised by transparent access to learning strategies and methods”.

TABLE 5.1 Classroom discussion points on the implication of a constructivist teaching approach: the role of the teacher and learners.

The Teacher	The learner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher should consider the prior knowledge and experiences learners bring to class • The teacher is aware that learners construct their knowledge through a process of active enquiry • The teacher provides resources as agency for the active ‘discovery’ of knowledge • The teacher assists the learner with the assimilation of new and old knowledge • The learning programme provided by the teacher should be sufficiently flexible to permit development along lines of learner enquiry • The teacher will present authentic tasks to contextualize learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the learner is to actively participate in their own education • Learners are expected to accommodate and assimilate new information with their current understanding • Learners who actively reflect on their own learning processes and experiences control their own learning. • Learners begin their study with pre-conceived notions and are often very reluctant to give up their established schema/idea and may reject new information that challenges prior knowledge • Learners may not be aware of the reasons they hold such strong ideas/schemata, thus they will be given the tools and opportunity to

<p>through real-world, case-based learning environments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher will provide scaffolding at the right time and the right level • Teachers will keep in mind that learners will interpret information in different ways • The teacher should create situations where the learners feel safe to question and reflect on their own thinking and learning processes. • The teacher will support and advocate collaboration in constructing knowledge, not competition • The teacher will encourage development through intersubjectivity²³ • The teacher will provide opportunities for more expert and less expert participants to learn from each other 	<p>question their own preconceived ideas about learning and knowledge acquisition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners would do well to embrace the opportunity to test ideas, skills, and information through relevant activities • Learners would do well to embrace the different 'lenses' to see things in new ways that the teacher will provide for them. • Learners who are aware of the significance of the potential learning opportunities the ZDP (zone of proximal development) presents to them, will collaborate with their peers with focus and enthusiasm.
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(adapted from Anon., 2016)

According to Bodner (1985: 6),

Piaget believed that knowledge is acquired as the result of a life-long constructive process in which we try to organize, structure, and restructure our experiences in light of existing schemes of thought, and thereby gradually modify and expand these schemes.

The devising strategies of improvisation and workshop especially lend itself to the expansion of existing perspectives and “schemes” by way of creative collaboration, embodiment, and cognition. When learners create characters, stories and structure, their experiences on the rehearsal floor may shift their perspectives in a more concentrated and dramatic fashion. Knowledge that could have potentially taken them years to realise, can be acquired much quicker. It is quite significant that the CAPS for the FET phase, reminds the drama teacher again and again that she should put devices in place to assist her learners to “reflect” on their thinking, learning and performance processes (RSA

²³ Verenikina (in Shabani et al., 2010: 238) points out that “intersubjectivity is a gradually established understanding between the teacher and her students: as she removes explicit instructions and stop solving problems”.

Department of Education, 2011: 22, 50, 51, 52, 61). Teaching them the necessary vocabulary to reflect on their creative processes and thinking is one of many valuable strategies that a drama teacher may utilise in order to fulfil this requirement. Thus I will propose strategic reflection devices or questions as the second route marker to aid teacher praxis in the context of cognitive learning processes inherent to devising.

5.2.3.2 Route Marker 2: Strategic Reflective Devices or Questions

Adequate reflection strategies empower learners to think, evaluate and modify their own strategies of acquiring knowledge. These strategies are what Hyerle (2014: 163) refers to as the cognitive processes of “describing, comparing, categorising, seeing cause-and-effect relationships, seeing part-whole relationships, and building analogical reasoning and metaphorical understanding”. I will explore this argument further in Chapter 6, section 6.2.

5.2.3.3 Route Marker 3: The Cognitive Processes Inherent to the Process of Improvisation

The third and final route marker that may serve teacher praxis in the context of devising is focussed exclusively on the cognitive processes learners undergo whilst improvising.

The findings of an empirical study on improvisation conducted by Brian Magerko, Waleed Manzoul, Mark Riedl, Allan Baumer, Daniel Fuller, Kurt Luther, and Celia Pearce (2009: 2), “to build an understanding of the cognitive processes of both novices and experts when improvising a scene on”, may serve as agency for effective facilitation of the cognitive learning processes learners may experience during improvisation. These scholars conducted a “large-scale study of performing human improvisers”, in order to “acquire a deeper understanding of human creativity and cognition through an empirical study of improv” with the hope “to build an understanding of the cognitive processes of both novices and experts when improvising a scene on stage” (Magerko et al, 2009:1). When the drama teacher as a facilitator of improvisation unpack the pedagogical value of the practice as a cognitive learning experience, she assists learners in reflecting on their own mental processes during the process. It offers a more objective lens through which learners may view their performance skills and strategies.

For the purpose of brevity I will summarise the findings of these scholars.

- Improvisers, Magerko, et al. (2009:5) writes “engage in cognitive processes such as inference, schema generation, mental imagery, theory of mind, and decision-making while performing a scene”.

- Magerko, et al. (2009:5) writes that at any given time these basic cognitive processes are employed during the improvised scenes. ‘Inference’ take place when participants ‘read’ and interpret each other’s suggestions and insinuations; when they draw conclusions and respond to implications during the creative process.
- Participants of the study reported the generation of “a schema of features of a character’s activities and behaviours to be acted on over the course of a scene” Magerko, et al. (2009:5). This reading of a characters intentions, characteristic and possible goals “is highly related to improvisation games that are used to teach how to build characters, such as Johnstone’s Fast Food Stanislavski technique” Magerko, et al. (2009: 5), points out.
- In general improvisers are required to use of mental imagery; this is a key feature of improvisations as participants have only their imagination to rely in order to create and/ “visualize their environment and considered how it would affect their actions” (Magerko, et al., 2009: 6).
- Improvisation requires of participants to move a scene forward at all times, therefor they are constantly required to make decisions based on that which was suggested by the action that went before. Decision making strategies during improvised performance are simplified by the “established improvisation techniques” such as ““Yes, and...” and “the mimicking of another improvisers” (Magerko, et al., 2009: 6). Improvisers also learn to make decisions based on “their notions of ‘believability’ or dramatic interest” as well as the ““reality of the scene’ to choose their next action, which involves reflecting on the current state of the scene” (Magerko, et al., 2009: 6).

Sawyer (2003: 37) calls the creative conspiracy that takes place between performers when they improvise a scene “a form of what is often called interactional synchrony”. When learners as participants of improvisation find, read and respect each other’s ‘groove’ or ‘interactional synchrony’, they reach what Magerko, et al. (2009:6) calls “cognitive consensus” as opposed to “cognitive divergence”²⁴.

For ‘cognitive convergence’ to occur during improvisation learners will have to establish “a state of agreement to assumptions”; this “state of agreement” in turn allows “for shared mental models to exist” between participants (Magerko, et al., 2009:7).

²⁴ When the assumptions of two or more improvisers do not match, there is cognitive divergence.

In this context, assumption refers to any belief that influences an individual’s understanding of the scene, such as assumptions about the audience or the environment (Magerko, et al., 2009: 6 -7).

Magerko et al, (2009:7) contends that there are “three steps of cognitive convergence” that need to occur before cognitive consensus is reached, they are: the processes of observation; repair; and acceptance. During the improvisation of a scene one learner may make an offer, suggesting by his movement and gestures that he is the king of the castle. The rest of the participants, having observed participants one’s offer, have to “repair” their mental model and align themselves with the first offer, and show their acceptance by taking on roles that suit the environment offered by the first player. “Accepting offers”, Prendergast and Saxton (2013: 18) writes, “is the opposite of blocking, which means rejecting an offer, thereby stopping an improvisation from moving forward”.

One of the key cognitive processes which occurs in relation to cognitive divergence during improvisation, is that of narrative development. It is the narrative development that governs action and moves the improvisation forward.

Narrative development is closely linked to the acceptance of offers, cognitive convergence and consensus. Not only do participants learn to negotiate the constant adding of storyline ideas to the unfolding improvisation, they do so whilst they are reading the assumptions of other participants in relation to their characterisation choices, their adding to, or changing of, setting and action.

It can be assumed that generally improvisation occurs in an empty space, therefore every detail of the setting within which the improvised scene occurs have to be imagined by the participants of the improvisation. Improvisers need to keep track of the imagined layout of the setting at all time. This “consistency of environment” adds to the complexity of the cognitive processes, or what Magerko, et al. (2009: 7) refers to as the “rapid intake and processing of data” that improvisers engage in during the practice.

The narrative is dependent on the participants’ complete commitment to the reality that they create for each other (Halpern et al. in Magerko, et al., 2009: 8). The practice of improvisation teaches learners to engage with group creativity in a positive and unselfish manner. In order for the scene to move forward, the accepting of gifts/ offers is just as important as the sharing of gifts/ offers. Prendergast and Saxton (2013: 18) describe the attitude of participants as being open to saying “‘Yes’ to an offer”, but more importantly, “not judging or rejecting it but immediately and spontaneously incorporating the offer into the story that is being built and explored”.

For quite a number of years I taught my learners that an improvised scene can be held together by thinking on your feet, by not trying to be funny, but to tell the story and to always respond with yes. Little did I realise the complexities of the explicit cognitive/mental functions the process of

improvisation entails. During my research I have developed exponentially in my understanding of the immense pedagogical significance of the dramatic processes that take place in my classroom every day. I certainly did, as I stated in the first chapter of my study, gain new insights into the learning and teaching opportunities improvisation and workshop as devising strategies present to the drama teacher in a secondary school context.

5.3 Embracing the ‘Multidimensional’ Role of the Teacher

In this section of the chapter I would like to offer ideas as to how the drama teacher may, by embracing the multidimensional nature of her teaching praxis, may conquer it. Being a teacher can be quite challenging, as Burnard (2011: 51) points out:

Under the creativity agenda teachers are expected to act effortlessly, fluidly, to take risks, be adventurous, and to develop pedagogy and classroom creativity in order to develop their own knowledge and skills as creative professionals. They are expected to develop creative learners who can succeed in a twenty-first-century economy that rewards creativity and innovation.

The diversity of the learning processes embedded in the dramatic processes of devised theatre requires a non-hierarchical “divisions of labour”, which in effect liberates the drama teacher from her traditional place in front of the classroom (Govan et al., 2007: 38). “Rather than using the form of lecture, or one-way communication from teacher to learner”, the dramatic processes (that theatre-making requires) “involves a hands-on, experiential form of learning where the learner is intellectually, emotionally, and physically steeped in narratives involving different individuals set in diverse scenarios” (Rao, online 2008).

I believe that there are four key concepts that may aid the drama teacher when she facilitates the emotionally complex learning and thinking processes her learners undergo during the devising practice. The first concept which is based in social cultural theory is the concept of mediation in relation to intersubjectivity.

I believe that all good teachers are good mediators of meaning. This entails (and I only highlight one key element pertaining to MLE or Mediated Learning Experience²⁵) that learners are made conscious of the relevance and purpose of the learning material, processes and contexts the teacher provide them with. “Giving meaning to a learning situation”, Lombofsky (2014: 182) argues, “motivates the

²⁵ “Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) which consists of a theory and a set of principals or criteria for mediated learning whereby, through interaction with an effective mediator, the cognitive functions and thinking processes can develop” (Lombofsky, 2014: 180).

students and encourages an emotional investment in driving the activity and the behaviour”.

Central to the concept of mediation is intersubjectivity, which “can be described as the establishment of shared understandings between the learner and the tutor” (Wertsch & Dixon-Krauss in Shabani et al., 2010: 238). The teacher does not give up her traditional role abruptly. Verenikina (in Shabani et al., 2010: 238) points out that intersubjectivity is a gradually established understanding between the teacher and her learners: as she removes explicit instructions and stop solving problems, the learners are made aware that she is transferring these responsibilities to them in order to empower them with the process of “internalization”²⁶. The teacher’s responsibility then deepens to mediating the meaning making processes of her learners by monitoring the ZPD (zone of proximal development) and how her learners’ “performance is mediated socially, that is, how shared understanding or intersubjectivity has been achieved through moving the learners from current capabilities to a higher, culturally mediated level of development” (Shabani, et al., 2010: 238).

The second concept that may aid a teacher in facilitating the thinking and learning processes inherent to the devising practice effectively, is that she embraces the improvisational character of her practice.

There are two qualities that, if exhibited by the teacher, may assist her in the ‘hands-on’ approach, that of *flexibility*, and *being responsive* to the needs of her learners. These two qualities appear frequently as themes when exploring the nature of the teacher in a constructivist-based classroom (DeZutter, 2011: 32). Sawyer in DeZutter points out that, “referring to teaching as improvisation allows us to draw direct contrast with scripted instruction” [...] which “does not allow teaching to emerge from the intellectual activities of students”. In this context the drama teacher thus open herself up and are confident enough in her subject knowledge to allow her learners’ reactions and responses to guide her teaching praxis. The teacher as improviser weaves the thoughts and opinions into the narrative of each lesson. Lesson plans are therefor never set in stone, it has to be subject to change.

DeZutter writes, thinking about your teaching practice on terms of improvisation is empowering as well as liberating, since it may help you see yourself “a creative, knowledgeable, and autonomous” professional (Sawyer in DeZutter) “rather than as technicians whose work mainly involves implementing procedures prepared by others – a view that has plagued the profession for over a century” (Rogoff et al., in DeZutter, 2003: 32 – 33).

²⁶ “Vygotsky states in his genetic law of development that any higher mental function necessarily goes through an external social stage in its development before becoming an internal, truly mental function. Thus, the function is initially social and the process through which it becomes an internal function is known as ‘internalization’” (in Shabani, et al., 2010: 238).

The onus is on the drama teacher to create intuitive educational decisions as the devising process evolves; to fill in the gaps as it were. DeZutter (2003:31) writes that a teacher must be able to make “instructional decisions on the fly, based on careful observation and diagnosis of student thinking”. This type of improvisational decision-making rests on the teacher’s ability to be responsive to learners’ evolving understanding, because the teacher (when stepping into the shoes of the facilitator) has to be able to *let go* (Wahl, 2011: 30-31). Wahl (2011) likens the act of teaching to that of theatrical performance and suggests that the performance will be more effective if the teacher allows herself to be informed by the audience response. Wahl (2011: 20) urges a new perspective on the art of teaching when she considers the reciprocal role of the audience: “There is a presumption that it is the artistry of the actor that determines the response of the audience [...] but it is in the interaction and engagement of the audience that artistry turns into a truly affective performance”.

Classroom praxis and teaching methodology can only be enhanced if it mimics the “give and take” character inherent to improvisation (Wahl, 2011: 20). When the drama teacher steps into the role of facilitator the active and conscious practice of *poieses* – the process that Bolton (in Prendergast & Saxton, 2013: 122) suggest “frees us into invention” – will imbue classroom praxis.

I have found the third concept to be quite a liberating one. This entails that a teacher should accept the arising conflict that may occur during collaboration and, rather than trying to rectify or control it, should just let it play out.

Schonmann (2005: 37) points out that the drama teacher has to be continually conscious of working within “a ‘compromised zone’ of expectations”. She gives two examples to describe this notion: (1) it could entail a process or performance that suffers attributed to the lack of performance skills of one of the participants; and (2) an “artistic process is blocked because of the unwillingness of a child to be open to the creative way offered to him or her” (Schonmann, 2005: 37). She argues that the teacher/facilitator “should allow the contradiction to stay there, understanding that the contradictions are actually dialectic elements in theatre and drama education. They are dialectical in nature, which means that opposing elements can coexist within the same entity and yet the whole constructed enterprise can work well” (Schonmann, 2005: 37).

Devising is a process that can only be successful if the teacher immerses herself in the intersubjectivity she offers to her learners. The “basis for the construction of intersubjectivity” in the context of the devising practice, is that all the participants, including the teacher, should be “able to go beyond one’s own perception and include another’s way of thinking is the basis for the

construction of intersubjectivity” (Ligorio, et al., 2005: 358). The drama class then becomes an “interworld” which Ligorio et al. (2005: 358) defines as:

(A)n intersubjective space where meanings are shared and no longer belong to one single person. Dialogue becomes the fulcrum of existence, the only place where the authenticity of the human being can be found and the “I” evolves only within a reciprocal relationship with its fellows.

Finally, the fourth concept, which I consider to be the biggest gift a teacher can give herself and her learners, is that she brings her passion into the classroom. According to Gallagher (2001: xi), Madeleine Grumet²⁷ writes that teachers must “be passionate about more than their teaching. They will then bring their passions and their commitments to their teaching, and infuse their work with the creativity of their whole lives”.

5.4 Conclusion

I would like to quote a section from a poem/essay written by Dorothy Heathcote (in Booth, 2012: 4) in which she described her philosophy as a teacher to introduce the conclusion of this chapter. I admire and agree with her words. Not only do her words sum up the complexity of the responsibility the teacher bears in relation to her learners and their experience of her classroom and her practice, her words also explore the idea that becoming a good teacher is a process, a process that encompasses the cognitive and emotional journey she plans and undertakes with her learners, every time they enter her classroom. A journey that allows for enough time and reflection, which challenges her understanding as well as that of her learners, a journey that requires of her to be flexible and willing to be changed by her learners.

*If I have any teaching wisdom, it is that I have learned to know
the struggle is the learning process;
and the skills of teaching lie
in making this time slow enough for enquiry;
interesting enough to loiter along the way;
rigorous enough for being buffeted in the matrix of ideas;
but with sufficient signposts seen for respite, planning,
and regathering of energy*

²⁷ Madeleine Grumet, an academic in curriculum theory and feminist theory was the Dean of Education at the University of North Carolina. She published a notable work: “Bitter Milk: Women and Teaching” in 1988 (Gallagher, 2001: xi, 143).

to fare forward on the way.

In the next and final chapter of this study I will discuss how the newly acquired knowledge unpacked in this chapter on the role of the teacher found relevance in the design and implemented of the Workbook created for the purpose of this study.

Chapter 6: Orientation to the workbook

To encourage individual children to search for a drama within themselves is to distort the meaning of dramatic form. Drama is not self-expression; it is a form of group symbolism seeking universal, not individual truths. Progressive educators throughout the century have been mistaken in their view of drama as child-centered and self-expressive, and drama teachers have been foolish to believe them! (Bolton, 1985: 154)

6.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to orientate the reader to the Workbook titled, “Conservation: Devising an environmentally conscious performance piece” (appendix A). This chapter will explain the choices I made concerning learner resources/devising strategies and the scaffolding²⁸ of activities included in the Workbook in relation to the underpinning philosophical assumptions that supports these choices.

I designed the Workbook to be executed by Grade 8 learners in the third term of 2016. After careful reflection, during the implementation of the Workbook, the timeframe were extended to include the first two weeks of term four of 2016. I will explain this action in section 6.2.2 of this chapter. The Workbook and the implementation thereof is in fact tangible evidence of the “action plan”– a key component of the action enquirer’s journey, I made in order to find a practical solution to an “educational problem” (Creswell, 2012: 576; 586).

With this chapter I hope to illustrate if and how the *Roadmap to Devising* (manifested in the literature study and resulting resource Workbook) aided me to come to terms with the research question that initiated this study, which was: How does a drama teacher, especially a novice teacher, negotiate the glaring discrepancy between WHAT she should do according to the CAPS for Drama, particularly when she utilises workshop and improvisation as play-building strategies, and HOW she should do it, in order to adhere to the aims of The National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12?

I would like to state at this point that none of my devising experiments would have come to fruition if I did not have the generous support of the Head of Department: Drama at Somerset College, Jhanie van Aswegen. I will be referring to her by name in this chapter with regards to the role she played in

²⁸ “The metaphor of ‘scaffolding’ is particularly helpful in drama education because it suggests both the kind of active, creative and exploratory learning which is central to the subject, and the kind of structured intervention which enables the students to move forward. In practice, what this means is that the rationale, starting point and learning objectives for the drama are carefully planned in advance, although, unlike science where the results of experiments are predicted and predictable, in drama it is the particular area of learning which is planned, and not the shape or outcome of the practical work” (Nicholson, 2000: 5).

the capacity of an advisor and co-facilitator.

The literature I reviewed at the inception of this study, and my own experience focussed by a handful and very basic philosophical assumptions underpinned my thinking the initial design and the content considerations of the Workbook.

The first, very obvious, but often overlooked philosophical assumption is based on the “‘teaching as performance’ metaphor” Sawyer reflects on in *Structure and Improvisation in Creative Teaching* (2011: 4). This metaphor implies that if the teacher does not find the learning material that she has to facilitate interesting and thought provoking she will be unable to create meaningful experiences for her learners. Learners are after all the audience and “spect-actors”²⁹ in the *theatre* of the classroom: if the teacher cannot bring herself to be a passionate, enthusiastic, inspiring and flexible participant in the creative processes she proposes, the teacher will suffer the consequences of a disengaged and apathetic *audience* (Gallagher, 2001; Wahl, 2011).

The second philosophical assumption that guided my choices of activities and approach to facilitation is the notion that the teacher’s consciousness about social responsibility should drive all her actions. The teacher’s awareness that her choice of learning material and activities could potentially foster and unlock the learners’ understanding of their own social will and responsibility should guide her praxis. David Pammenter (in Kempe, 2000: 71) notes that “theatre is a social art and therefore the practitioner has a social responsibility for the conception of the material” they choose to work with.

In the following section I will discuss my approach to the choice and design of the learning material I intentionally included in the Workbook, in accordance to the stated principles. I include a separate hard copy of the Workbook, Appendix A, in the resources pack in order to facilitate the reading of this chapter.

6.2 Eliciting empathetic learner responses

For the purpose of the reading of this section of the chapter, I draw the reader’s attention to Appendix A: pp. 1; 4 – 6; 21 – 25.

I was quite fortunate that the issue of nature conservation, the curriculum topic that the Workbook

²⁹ “(Boal’s) experimental theatre work had started much earlier, in the early 1960s, in his homeland, Brazil where he developed the idea that an audience could stop a performance and suggest alternative behaviours for the characters. He extended this eventually to inviting audience members onto the stage to take over from the actors... He called these newly empowered members of the public: ‘spect-actors’”. (Bolton, 2007: 55-56)

explores, is such an important and relevant theme for South Africans. The issue of rhino poaching, especially, has been given extensive media coverage. To stay in compliance with the curriculum, the Somerset College Drama department has been reading Nicholas Ellenbogen's *Horn of Sorrow* (1988), for the past few years. This play deals with rhino poaching in part due to socio economic hardships "fostered" by the apartheid government, rather than just merely vilifying poachers (Ellenbogen, 1999: 80). Jhanie van Aswegen agreed that I could utilise this script as a starting point for a devising workbook. It was quite prodigious that the performance style of this play was in line with my then recent experiences with the work of Boal, and my exploration of South African workshop strategies. The performance style of *Horn of Sorrow* (1988) utilises techniques that include physical theatre, music, mime, tableaux and "visual humour" (Ellenbogen, 1999: 80).

Before we could study the play, however, I deemed it necessary to make learners aware of the environmental concerns we face today. The issue of rhino poaching is better known to South African learners, less so the issues of deforestation and over-fishing for instance. In order to expose learners to the gravity of these issues and to stimulate performance I had to choose activities that would elicit emotional as well as cognitive responses of my learners and to make it relevant to the 'life-world' of children living in Somerset West. In the first two lessons, pp. 4 - 6 of the Workbook (see Appendix A) I utilised images provided in the HELP FILE, pp. 21 - 25, as pretext³⁰ to class discussions and reflective questions in order to guide learners towards displaying empathy.

Sawyer (in De Zutter, 2011: 32) points out that in order for learners to be willing participants in the "co-construction of knowledge" as part of classroom praxis, it is important that they not only buy into the creative processes, but perhaps more importantly, they need to find the themes and content of the learning and teaching material worthy of exploration. The reflection questions provided in the first section of the Workbook were intended to make learners think about their world, how they fit into it and how nature conservation concerns impact this world. I specifically asked learners to write about their feelings (see pp. 5 - 6 in Appendix A) about the nature conservation issues that came up in the class discussions to stir their passion; a sense of indignation about the devastation humanity is capable of. I am of the opinion that if learners are lead to access and consider their feelings about the themes they create plays about, it incentivise the dramatic processes they engage in during devising. Showing them the relevance of the use of drama to conscientise learners and audiences alike about nature conservation ties in with this concept (see p. 4 in Appendix A). During this phase of the devising

³⁰ "One effective starting point is what Cecily O'Neill has called a pretext - a stimulus which implies a strong context and characters, and plants clues for the creation of an enticing drama world. As in life, students link the significant events and characters of their emerging fictional world in a meaningful way, making sense of events" (Simons, 2000: 19).

process, namely Stage Two (see Chapter 3, section 3.2), which includes response to stimuli, I introduced the play and performance style that we would study (see p. 5).

The philosophical assumption that the creative collaborative processes inherent to devising engenders consistent reflection on opinions, thoughts, and creative ideas and responses, should motivate the drama teacher to provide structured reflection opportunities for her learners. Providing reflection opportunities is a very basic determining factor for sound teacher practice, and not only because the CAPS requires it as alluded to in the previous chapter. Thus during the design phase of the Workbook I endeavoured to allocate sufficient time for reflective activities whether it be class- or group discussions, and/or written testimony. Learners' personal reflections when tethered to the use of the imagination "refreshes (the learners') daily outlooks, challenges their assumptions, and makes the familiar strange" (Rao, online 2008). According to Gallagher (2001: 118), when learners can relate to the structure and content of a set task, reflectively, dramatic practice "invites students' lives into the classroom so they can begin to reflect on the ways their learning might bring new light to bear on their lives beyond the classroom walls". She concedes:

Of course, drama does not always succeed in inviting students to engage their lives in their work and to construct new knowledge, but the chances of engaging the students in a meaningful experience that has the potential of transforming their thinking is increased if the teacher is able to create the task that will focus their questioning. (Gallagher, 2001: 118)

This assumption lies at the core of constructivist-inspired teaching, an approach to teaching that this study has focussed on almost exclusively. DeZutter (2011: 30) writes "that students should be placed in situations that challenge their prior conceptions and press them to develop more sophisticated ones". The role of the teacher she notes is "to design and facilitate situations and instructional activities that will trigger this process" (DeZutter, 2011: 30). Thus during the design phase of the Workbook, (see Stage One, section 3.2) I endeavoured to allocate enough time for reflective activities, debate, and class discussion that focussed specifically on the personal experience of each group member during the different stages of the devising process. This reflective approach to learning would then, hopefully, in turn encourage a more reflective tone to the discussions and debates within the groups themselves when working on their own during Stage Three and Four of the devising process (see Chapter 3, section 3.2).

6.3 Collaborative conversations: classroom praxis

In this section of the chapter I would like to point the reader's attention to pp. 7 – 13 of Appendix A.

The most significant philosophical assumption that guided my creative choices when compiling the Workbook, is that the core of all the creative learning activities that take place during the devising process, save for the writing of monologues and duologues (see p. 13), are based on what Toivanena (2011: 61) calls “collaborative conversations”. I am of the opinion that the individual’s creativity is extended, enhanced and fostered through creative collaboration with others. All the performance driven activities included in this Workbook are centred on creative expression in groups via carefully selected improvisation exercises. Even the monologues and duologues created by the learners can potentially be shaped and edited by their group via polished improvisation. Not all the ingredients in a chocolate cake taste equally good, but when mixed together and baked, it is delicious.

‘Collaborative conversations’ is a useful metaphor for a drama teacher to base her facilitation of creative collaboration activities on. It takes on various forms not only necessarily linked to performance. The facilitator needs only to be a good conversationalist knowing how and when to draw participants into the conversation, by reading body language, by knowing when to keep quiet and to listen, having patience, and most of all by trusting your own and your learners’ intuition. During the design and implementation stages of this Workbook, for instance, my fellow drama teacher, Jhanie van Aswegen, and I naturally participated in ‘collaborative conversations’ by discussing and reflecting on the activities to include in the scaffolding of the general content. During the implementation phase, we reflected on our own practice, discussing ways and means to enhance our facilitation methods etc.

For me the word ‘conversation’ is especially relevant to devising since it implies discussion, relaxed dialogue, the sharing of different opinions, the sharing of perspectives, listening, appropriate responses and silence.

6.3.1 Activities and choices

I used three Theatre of the Oppressed (or TO) styled activities in the Workbook. All three of the activities are either adapted from the original by other scholars/teachers or by myself to suit the needs of my learners, ditto for the names of the exercises. I called them: *Talking & Moving Statues* (p. 7 of Appendix A), *Three Images* and *Cop(s) in the Head* (pp. 11 – 13 of Appendix A). These exercises are useful improvisation strategies to use especially with learners in Grade 8 who know very little about the language of the theatre; blocking is a foreign concept to most of them, the power of symbols on stage are in most cases totally lost on them. When learners create physical images representative of themes, issues, concepts, imagined characters and/or animals they inadvertently create theatre.

Creating images or tableaux have the added benefit of engaging the imagination of the audience; it evoke symbols and inculcate subtext. It can also give information answering the questions: What? How? and Where? – without the use of an elaborate set, costumes or lights. This style of theatre making speaks to Pickering's (2005: 58) contention that "meaning [in theatre] is constructed both by performers and by audience"; when the audience "reads" the language of the theatre the spoken word is "but a small element in the overall communication that must take place".

Image theatre (of which *Talking & Moving Statues*, p. 7, is an example) requires of everyone to take part on a creative, physical and collaborative level. Learners engage "physically in the exploration of an agreed theme" (i.e. poverty, greed, poaching) with "'sculptures' made with their own and each other's bodies" and as a result the diverse meanings of the chosen themes are revealed to them (Boal in Babbage, 2004: 61). In this performance context, Boal (in Babbage, 2004: 61) points out that "everything is subject to criticism, to rectification". This style of improvisation gives learners the opportunity to reflect on their actions, reshape, edit and re-imagine images utilising creative collaboration and negotiation.

The images groups create/sculpt with their bodies in all three Boal-inspired activities, selected for the Workbook, afford learners the opportunity for an embodied experience of a theme or an issue, putting them in the shoes of perpetrator and victims alike. Even a ship leaking oil becomes the victim of a greedy owner. When learners sculpt an image/tableau of a rhino poaching incident for instance, the posture of the poacher is directly related to his motivations and status. This give the teacher the opportunity to discuss why people may become so greedy and/or desperate that they would risk their own lives and sacrifice an endangered animal. The learners who embody the poacher has the opportunity to deliberate and reflect on the perspectives and motivations of this character.

In this context thoughts and ideas are shared that may never have been considered or aired; reality enters the classroom, where people – real people – struggle to survive, fight to feed their insatiable greed, and/or revel in their power and capacity for cruelty. Gallagher (2001: 58) supports this notion, stating:

In short, the fictional, while presenting a particular view of truth, also challenges previous understandings of 'the truth' of a situation. It is these new possibilities for students that engage them in the mental work of role-play in drama.

Once learners have sculpted or created images, these images can be "dynamised" (see pp. 7; 11 in Appendix A) or "animated" as Prendergast and Saxton (2013: 108) note, in "a wide variety" of ways.

According to Babbage (2004: 121-122) dynamisation can occur on three levels, namely: movement, sound and action, and each stage “is an opportunity to discover more about the idea being expressed”. Since the body is doing all the work, and the image is representative, learners who are not natural performers are released from trying to ‘act’ as if he or she is a poacher. If you zoom out from the poacher and look at the possible image as a whole, the audience might see a dying rhino created by the bodies of two learners; another learner as a baobab tree; a body sculpture representing a watering hole; and a learner perching as a vulture nearby. When the image is dynamised you may hear the rhino’s final thoughts and the thud as it falls; see the vulture hop closer with a hungry, gleeful squawk; and the poacher kneeling by the rhino, ready to saw off its horn. Dynamised images can therefore be powerful and theatrical at the same time.

I chose two activities *Three Images* and *Cop(s) in the Head* (pp. 11 of Appendix A) for very specific reasons. I selected the *Three Images* activity because it is an embodied improvisation, which is very well suited to stimulating potential plot lines and create visual imagery to symbolise themes. Learners can utilise the different ‘images’ they have created in the improvisation as contexts for the development of characters which may in turn be developed into scenes. I adapted the *Cop(s) in the Head* activity with the specific intention that learners could utilise it to create dialogue. The internal dialogue that characters voice during the improvisation is an effective starting point for the writing of dialogue for specific characters. I will qualify this statement in section 6.2.2 of this chapter. Indeed all the improvisation exercises were carefully selected to serve as agency for the creation of a narrative, well-rounded and physically realised characters and dialogue.

I endeavoured to model the layout and sequence of each lesson in the Workbook pertaining to improvisation as a devising strategy on the advice Babbage (2004) gives applied theatre practitioners when they have limited time to facilitate a TO workshop. I bullet these “basic elements” that a typical TO workshop would include for clarity:

- preparing the body, both individually and in interaction;
 - use of games, to build energy and focus and introduce issues of power;
 - creation of images, and their dynamisation and transformation through sound, movement and action; and
 - exploration of participants’ own themes, using the theatrical forms judged most appropriate.
- (Babbage, 2004: 111)

These structuring ideas were very helpful in that it kept the facilitation on track, but it also increased

the authenticity of the creative and collaborative experiences of the learners.

The last step of the different improvisation activities involves a presentation to the rest of the class (see pp. 7; 11) Presentation (giving evidence of work done) and the resulting class discussions it incites also helps to focus the process of the groups without the aid of a teacher's presence. After each Improvisation Cycle, learners were required to reflect, in writing, on their own and their classmates' creative experiences, an activity I included as a metacognitive³¹ strategy to aid the learners to internalise³² their acquired knowledge. The questions posed were very simple and open-ended (see pp. 8-10; 12).

6.3.2 Implementation: overcoming foreseen and unforeseen problems

A few key problems with regards to the effective facilitation of a Devised Theatre Workbook presented itself during the design as well as the implementation stages of the Workbook. The first of which is the potential difficulties surrounding writing a devised script. I would like to draw the readers' attention to the following actions I took in this regard, evident in pp. 1, 10, 17-18 of Appendix A.

Transcribing the 'ongoing' collaborative conversations required skill and persistence, but even the strategies learners utilise when recording and transcribing, "the different stages of the devising process can help students acquire the particularly difficult skill of editing and shaping their work and then reflecting upon their journey" (Kempe, 2000: 72). For this component of the Workbook learners were allowed to use their cell phones and tablets to film their improvisations, with strict instructions related to privacy laws (see pp. 10, 13 of Appendix A).

I included the *Finding Alice* exercise (p. 13 of Appendix A) because it is a very simple, yet effective devising tool for learners to use. It provides an example framework, which helps learners to structure their narratives into separate scenes.

On the advice of Jhanie van Aswegen, we decided that the scripts that are generated on the rehearsal floor, should to be transcribed using Google Docs³³. It is a very practical solution to collaborative

³¹ "Metacognitive [...] is the term used to describe the skills and strategies involved in selecting, applying and monitoring one's own cognitive skills in relation to a specific task or problem" (Moonsamy, 2014: 53).

³² "Vygotsky states in his genetic law of development that any higher mental function necessarily goes through an external social stage in its development before becoming an internal, truly mental function. Thus, the function is initially social and the process through which it becomes an internal function is known as 'internalization'" (in Shabani, et al., 2010: 238).

³³ I am lucky enough to work at a school where learners have ready access to computers and the internet. Somerset College is a Google school. This entails that we use the Google Suite for Education and Google Classroom as an interactive and

script writing (see pp. 1; 17 of Appendix A). It is an excellent tool for teachers to check the progress of the play scripts of the different groups' and to ascertain the level of participation of each learner. Learners were also provided with an example script to assist them to format their scripts (see pp. 17 – 18 of Appendix A).

I added a “Devising Checklist” (see p. 2 in Appendix A) and general “Tips on Devising” (see pp. 19-20 in Appendix A) with the intention to enrich and enhance the creative collaborative processes with regards to Stage Four and Five of the devising process. Adding the checklist required of learners to extend their performance over and above the performance styles evident in the *Horn of Sorrow* (1988).

The second key problem I faced, rearing its head during the implementation of the Workbook, was the amount of time the devising process takes. Devising plays, even very short plays, can be a time consuming endeavour. Half way through the implementation process, Jhanie van Aswegen, had to make the decision to stagger the Workbook over two terms, if we wanted the creative depth of the process to be served, and not adhere to the initial timeframe as evident on p. 1 of Appendix A. This created an initial problem concerning the formal practical assessment for the term. Overcoming this problem created a surprising and very interesting outcome. We decided on the following course of action that would decide the outcomes of the formal assessment for Term 3 2016:

- Learners had to learn the monologues and duologues they had written based on the group's chosen theme/conservation issue(s).
- Learners had to then create images that could provide plausible contexts for the different duologues and monologues.
- The groups had to incorporate at least three of the Performance Conventions (see Devising Checklist on pp. 3 of Appendix A) in their performance.
- Learners had to ensure that the transitions between the scenes incorporated stylised movements and/or choreography.

For the final assessment in Term Four of 2016 the Grade 8s were afforded the opportunity to polish and extend the performance pieces over the course of two weeks. Staggering the process and final performances like this had the added benefit of giving learners the chance to incorporate the input

collaborative tool to enhance teaching. I have included the internet address of the tutorial on how to use Google Docs on p. 17 of Appendix A.

and ideas received from their classmates and teacher(s) after their initial performance.

The third key problem (that I foresaw during the design phase of the Workbook) was the risks involved in learner participation in the context of improvisation for devising. In Chapter 4, the chapter that focusses on improvisation in the classroom, the word *risk* features no less than eighteen times.

I want to draw the attention at this point of the discussion to the facilitation techniques of the chosen teacher led improvisation activities included in the Workbook (see Appendix A), i.e. *Talking & Moving Statues* (p. 7); *Animalistics* (p. 9); *Three Images* and *Cop(s) in the Head* (p. 11).

As previously stated I decided on these specific improvisation activities for the character, setting, dialogue and ultimately script rendering potential I saw in them. My inclusion of the three TO styled improvisation activities as previously stated, is based on my own first-hand experience of these improvisations during a Boal workshop. I remember vividly, that it was during the “Cops in the Head” improvisation that I suddenly realised that this activity has excellent script rendering potential. The activity asks of the participants to vocalise his/her character’s inner dialogue – a stream of dialogue motivated by his/her character’s subtext and context/backstory should flow from each mouth unceasingly. I remember thinking; this activity should help my learners devise dialogue. And I was right!

Not all learners, especially in Grade 8, are as aware of the potential character and play-building qualities these improvisation activities hold, therefore these activities must be carefully lead by the teacher. When learners participate in these activities, the teacher, as objective observer can guide learners (by entering in collaborative conversations with them) to reflect on their choices by commenting on the potential characters, dialogue or narratives the improvisation may render. Since learners are required to record their improvisations, the teacher’s advice and guidance will also be recorded for consideration during the workshop process. Unfortunately not even the teacher’s enthusiastic and guiding voice may make learners who have no experience in the process of improvisation feel comfortable. Prendergast and Saxton (2013: 62) gives sound advice to facilitators of improvisation when dealing with this type of learner:

When a participant voices an understandable fear, saying “I don’t know how to act!”, a facilitator must be able to grapple with those fears and to create an understanding that role play is distinct from acting. Taking the emphasis off the watching aspect of performance within a role play, and putting the focus on the doing – that we are all inside the story we are telling – is key.

The above advice compelled me to research the distinction between role-play and Stanislavskian characterisation. I included my findings in Chapter 4 on Improvisation, section 4.5.1. I found Prendergast and Saxton's (2013: 122 - 123) suggestion of teaching learners the "vocabulary of improvisation" a great agency to build learners' confidence. It also gives learners the opportunity to actively engage with "the bones of theatre as well as the surface" (Johnstone, 1999: 24). This vocabulary, in combination with Johnstone's philosophy of infusing improvisation with a positive attitude, is the language I require of my learners to use from day one. The basics of improvisation according to Prendergast and Saxton (2013: 123) lie in:

1. The Givens: The Who, Where, When, What, Why and How: the building blocks of any dialogue.
2. Status: The power relationships between two or more people that can fall anywhere between very high to very low status (and can shift within a scene).
3. Space: Space is something waiting to be filled; it can also refer to the energy field that surrounds people, so space is intimately connected to status.
4. Offers: The moves, gestures and/or words that are made and/or said by others in an improvisation.
5. Blocking: Refers to the tendency to refuse offers (refusing to speak, saying "No" to a suggestion made, etc.) that are made and will shut down even the most enthusiastic and positive improviser.

I base my own practice as facilitator on the good-natured mind-set and the generous sharing of ideas that the rules of Theatre Sports instils. I facilitate by giving equal amounts of positive feedback and creative suggestions and help the groups interact better by basing my practice on Heathcote's (in Booth, 2012: 8) techniques of: "drawing in those on the outside, moderating the dominant voices, and bringing the narrative to a fuller experience". I try to give as many creative suggestions or offers³⁴ as I deem fair, especially when learners get stuck or have an argument in their group; so that they can choose the option most suited to them. I have found that if I stay positive, enthusiastic and encouraging, the learners cannot but follow suit. It is however easier said than done. My classroom praxis are based on the following tenets:

- Base (or at least try to) classroom praxis on collaborative learning strategies

³⁴ In the realm of Theatre Sports: "Accepting offers means that a person in role in an improvisation is open to suggestions given by a partner or partners, or by participants. Being open is saying "Yes!" to an offer, not judging it or rejecting it but immediately and spontaneously incorporating the offer into the story that is being built and explored" (Prendergast & Saxton, 2013: 19).

- Trust your intuition
- Be generous with your creative ideas
- Ask guiding questions
- Apply the concept of “Yes! And...”³⁵
- Be a peacemaker
- Attune yourself to the body language of your pupils
- Show your enjoyment and enthusiasm
- Motivate learners to be fascinated by their own thinking and creative processes and confident that they can develop and improve them (Moonsamy, 2014: 59).

If all else fails, the Workbook provides a safety net for the struggling (or apathetic) learner with detailed instructions and set periods in which to complete tasks. The learners know from the get-go what the assessment paradigms are (see p. 2 in Addendum A). Thus, learners can constantly measure their formative process against what is required of them by the task. I intentionally did not specify if the assessment for the Process or the final Product would be based on the group’s process and performance or on the individual’s. Learners who chase marks often get extremely anxious if they know that their marks are dependent on the group’s efforts. Depending on how well the groups work together, the teacher can decide how she wants to assess them. However, the responsible thing to do would be to tell the learners from the start of the process if their marks are dependent on the group’s process and performance OR if they would be assessed on their individual process and performance.

The reflection questions, previously alluded to in this chapter, were included in the Workbook specifically to assist learners to be conscious of their engagement in the devising process since it requires of learners to reflect on and come to terms with their own practice. In this context, although I vociferously agree with Bolton’s (1985: 154) contention quoted in the heading of this chapter which claims that the value of Drama in education lies in “group symbolism seeking universal, not individual truths”; learners should be provided with the chance to reflect on their own learning and their own personal growth as their perspectives shift and their thinking become more sophisticated. As learners come to terms with their own thoughts, behaviour and intentions (conscious or unconscious) during creative process, they develop as creative collaborators; some at a slower pace than others, but they all gain from the experience. It is therefore imperative that the teacher facilitate the reflective activities learners engage with during the devising process as consciously,

³⁵ This type of creative and reflective form of reciprocity based on the ostensibly simple strategy of ‘adding on’ to the improvised narrative speaks to the complexity of the cognitive thinking strategies learners employ during improvisation (Magerko, et al., 2009: 6).

empathetically, thoughtfully and with the same energy as they would the performance generating activities. In my experience, not a lot of learners can resist the attraction of improvisation. The practice certainly empowers the drama teacher to help her learners grow into more empathetic, fun loving and creative individuals.

The utilisation of improvisation as a devising strategy is an immensely creative, exciting and powerful education tool. Berk and Trieber (2009) highlight four key instructional reasons for using improvisation in the classroom, which influenced my creative decisions when I designed the Workbook. These scholars' perspective on the educational value of the form also made me rethink and re-imagine my facilitation of the practice. I list them for clarification:

1. It is consistent with the characteristics of the current generation of students, also known as the Net Generation (aka Millennials [Howe & Strauss, 2000], born between 1982 and 2003), which has grown up with the technology – especially their desire to learn by inductive discovery, experientially, their need for social interaction and collaboration, their emotional openness, and their limited attention span;
2. it taps into students' multiple and emotional intelligences, particularly verbal/linguistic, visual/spatial, bodily/kinaesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal;
3. it fosters collaborative learning by helping to build trust, respect, and team spirit as well as listening, verbal and nonverbal communication, ad-libbing, role-playing, risk-taking, and storytelling skills; and
4. it promotes deep learning through the active engagement with new ideas, concepts, or problems; linking the activities or tasks to prior learning; applying the content to real-life applications; and evaluating the logic and evidence presented. (Berk & Trieber, 2009: 33)

The improvisation strategies employed in the Workbook were specifically chosen and adapted to help learners to devise a play. I employed as many playful activities as possible, from the Boal inspired exercises to *Animalistics*. I firmly believe that dramatic processes and my approach to the facilitation thereof, especially when devising with younger learners should be underpinned by playfulness. We should all have fun while creating performances, since it induces spontaneity, which aids the release of learners' uninhibited creativity. There are two very good reasons why playfulness serves as agency for the devising process. Firstly when learners improvise in the drama class they involve themselves in spontaneous play. Learners engage whole-heartedly in this style of play, having been assured by

the teacher that it is perfectly fine to make mistakes and that there is absolutely no judgement. Improvisation for devising is a form of “research”; it is about exploring ideas and characters; where participants “open up ‘creative possibilities for each other [to]... push against the expected’” (Govan, et al., 2007:39; Lockford & Pelias in Prendergast & Saxton, 2013:19). Secondly, if playfulness underpin the creative discussions during the collaboration processes, it can help learners move forward without unnecessary bickering. In fact, as Lockford and Pelias (in Prendergast & Saxton, 2013:19) suggest the quality of playfulness,

Asks participants to recognize that communication can be a tricky business, filled with miscommunications that may actually be useful and enjoyable spaces to explore, with the added understanding that ‘when choices are made, they are not the only choices available.

Thirdly playfulness, according to these scholars “involves growing comfortable with unpredictability” which helps learners to think “beyond patterns” (Lockford & Pelias in Prendergast & Saxton, 2013:19).

6.4 Conclusion

Although I based my research design on the paradigm of an action theory enquiry, I realise that the study I offer is far from that. In fact I got stuck in trying to answer the first two questions this research methodology requires of the practitioner, i.e. “How do I understand what I am doing? How do I improve it?” (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006: 14). I was convinced on the outset of this journey that I did not know enough about what it is that I am doing in order to improve it. My theoretical knowledge was limited; my teaching practice concerning devising strategies were based on intuition and guesswork.

Finally I believe the Workbook (Appendix A) tasks tied in successfully with the Overarching aims of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 (see TABLE 6.3).

TABLE 6.1 Overarching aims of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 reflected in Workbook (See Appendix A)

The National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 aims to produce learners that are able to: →	Page references to show curriculum compliance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvisation activities, see pp. 7 - 11; workshop and script writing opportunities, pp 13 - 15.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work effectively as individuals and with others as members of a team; • organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively; • collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information; • communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes; • use science and technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others; and demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation. 	<p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners utilise cell phones for education purposes, recording scenes and researching environmental issues; learners work in Google doc. to write and edit scripts. <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
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(RSA Department of Education, 2011: 5)

The proof as they say is in the pudding. The Workbook required of the Grade 8 Drama learners to relate to environmental concerns from many different perspectives, but by ‘walking in the shoes’ of victims and perpetrators alike and telling their stories through images and performance, learners especially realised that lives lived are more complex than they have previously thought. The Workbook guided learners to gain first hand, if imagined, insights into the contexts that influence statistics. In this, the task was certainly compliant with the following Aims of drama in Creative Arts (GET: senior phase):

- The study of drama in Creative Arts gives learners tools to represent human experiences in dramatic form, through processes of participation, collaboration, exploration and presentation.
- Drama encourages the creative exploration of themes and issues, creates a safe context for this exploration, and provides opportunities to reflect on the insights gained in the process.
- In drama, the learner explores the motivation and the relationships between people in a real, imagined or historical context, to help him or her understand the world. (RSA Department of Education, 2011: 8 – 9; see also TABLE 1.7 in Chapter 1)

The process did not always go as smoothly as I would have liked. Jhanie and I dealt with quite a lot of initial reticence and indifference to the topic on environmental concerns and the subject Drama in

general, but I am quite pleased to say that even the seeming most apathetic of learners did in fact decide to choose Drama as their Creative Arts option for 2017. This small victory is due to a number of reasons.

We kept our “Net Geners” busy at “‘twitch’ speed” – I unashamedly pinch vocabulary from Berk and Trieber here. The games and improvisations included in the Workbook required of our learners to collaborate in a creative, and highly charged physical, emotional and cognitive setting. I can safely say that the learners enthusiasm and focus and the enjoyment they derived from some of the activities were quite an “unanticipated effect” of this study (Kemmis, et al., 2014: 108).

The activities and relevance of the topic somehow managed to provide “students with the active, participatory, visual, collaborative, fast moving, quick thinking, rapid responding, emotionally freeing, spontaneous, combustible vehicle they so badly desire” (Berk & Trieber, 2009: 35). The activities kept every single learner on their toes, requiring of them to interact “in the classroom with their peers, the instructor, tools, and concepts” (Berk & Trieber, 2009: 34-35) and revelling in their own and each other’s surprising creativity. The implementation of the Workbook proved my own assumptions that my newly acquired knowledge of the devising practice exposed me to, which is that this experimental, eclectic, egalitarian and theatrical style of theatre making suites the needs of my learners, as well as my own.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Every teacher experiences problems unique to their subject. The problem that instigated my research study arose from a feeling of dissatisfaction with my inability to be an effective facilitator of the theatrical workshop process. This problem required of me to attain the necessary skills to solve it. The fact that I believed the workshop process in the South African theatre context hampered creativity, just because I was (and still is) so enamoured with the aesthetic-creative and diverse performance strategies of Devised Theatre, exacerbated the problem.

The selection of literature reviewed for this study presented me with the skills and knowledge, however, to identify where my weaknesses were and how to go about remedying them. It also taught me that my assumptions should be based on fact and not feelings.

The most significant conclusion that arose from my research on South African Workshop Theatre, is that I was wrong in my assumption that the creative processes that define this form, hampers creativity. The root of my problem was that I did not place enough value in the curriculum guidelines for this specific workshop process. I thought the performance template these guidelines provided were to didactic and restrictive. Now I know that if you cannot employ these ostensibly simple guidelines efficiently in your classroom, the eclectic nature of the devising strategies cannot be explored with enough rigour. Your learners may devise, although seemingly creative, very thin and unconsidered performance pieces. I have always been weary of creating art for art's sake³⁶.

My research of the South African workshop process rendered the following conclusions that now underpin my practice with regards to devising and/or workshopping. The first conclusion centres on the unique performance styles South African Workshop Theatre utilises. It is a unique amalgamation of vibrant and physically expressive characters; experiments with Grotowski's Poor Theatre techniques and Brecht's Epic Theatre. I specifically utilise Poor Theatre techniques in the devising strategies for my learners since it strives for a higher purpose than mere acting; it requires of learners to discard the "masks" they wear daily and to expose the truth of themselves and their characters to their peers and the audience (Pickering, 2005: 148). I utilise the episodic plot structure typical to Epic Theatre, for instance, since it aids scriptwriting. It allows for short, impactful scenes, which has "its own unity although it exists within a larger narrative structure" and do not have to be "linked temporally or causally to the episodes that precede or follow it" (Pickering, 2005: 22).

³⁶"A phrase associated with the aesthetic doctrine that art is self-sufficient and need serve no moral or political purpose" (Drabble, 2000: 43).

The second conclusion is that no story is worth telling if it is not grounded in authenticity and “strives for higher motives” as both Grotowski and Brecht advocated (Pickering, 2005: 148). Whether it be to serve a spiritual, social or political function. Thus, I always guide my learners to focus on themes and symbolism that are relevant to them and the society that they live in when devising the content of their performance pieces. The content of the devising tasks I set now include activities that guide learners to relate their experiences in relation to their life-world; to imagine the lives of other people, different from them; and to treat their real/imagined narratives with empathy. South African drama teachers are indeed privileged to model their learners creative collaborative processes on that of the pioneers of South African Workshop Theatre, such as Barney Simon, Winston Ntshona, John Kani, Athol Fugard, Percy Mtwa and Mbongeni Ngema whose works were ground breaking, their motives socially-politically inspired and their narratives based on intensely personal experiences.

My exploration of Devised Theatre provided me with instructive conclusions that I can apply in my teaching practice every day. The significance of this style of playmaking is that it is open-ended. Professional devisers seem to reinvent the wheel with every new devised performance piece and each devising company tailor their play making techniques and strategies to the outcomes that they envision. These companies actively and consciously free themselves from the hierarchical structures of traditional theatre, and award agency to every participant to become a co-creator; thus giving them a vested interest in the final product. I am privileged in the context of my teaching position at my current school to have been given a performance space within which I can experiment with different performance generating strategies in relation to curriculum topics, and other school-based performances. Ultimately at the end of each devising process, each learner would have had the opportunity to gain experience as an actor, a writer, a designer of sound and/or lighting and a director. Through the process of devising, my learners become theatre makers in the fullest sense of the word, mostly without them even realising it.

Implementing the philosophy of “artistic democracy”, that underpins the practice of Devised Theatre, freed up my practice as a drama teacher (Oddey in Govan et al., 2007: 5). I have evolved from being a “sage on the stage” type teacher who required of my learners to passively accept that I have all the answers (King, 1993: 30). I actively and consciously endeavour to guide my learners to focus away from the self and focus on the group and to solve their own creative problems, rather than relying on my ideas and instructions. My confidence in this regard is bolstered by the fact that I plan every devising process carefully. I always provide my learners devising workbooks that contain scaffolded improvisation activities and other devising strategies.

My research on improvisation and the effective facilitation of this devising strategy in the classroom was central to this study. Improvisation is the most prolific of all the devising strategies since it can be utilised to explore themes, create characters, narratives and structure. The most significant conclusion drawn from the material I selected to review concerning improvisation, is that if the positive and creative collaborative spirit of improvisation underpin classroom praxis, tension and fear of failure is supplanted by a willingness to make mistakes in order to provide agency for group creativity. The validity of improvisation as a creative collaborative strategy cannot be overstated. The notion of Boal's spect-actor and the interactive nature of Theatre Sports that relies on the audience's suggestions to move forwards, allows learners to interact with the improvisation from an advisory position, giving suggestions, shaping and positively contributing to the activity their peers are involved in. This gives learners the opportunity to hone their skills as directors; as audience members they are thus required to stay actively involved with the improvisation activities of their peers. Improvisation for devising offers all learners, of all ages and acting ability, the opportunity to learn about characterisation, narrative techniques, different performance styles and theatrical conventions – what Johnstone (1999: 24) calls “the bones of theatre as well as the surface” – while they are playing and having fun.

Devising can become quite an emotionally fraught process when personal fears, difference of opinion and personality clashes overshadow the creative journey. If the principle of play and having fun, is effectively facilitated, it can help learners to stay positive throughout the devising process.

The role of the teacher during the facilitation of the devising process, I concluded, is actually quite simple. If all is said and done, she must equip herself (and her learners) with enough knowledge of the practice, and the learning and thinking opportunities it offers, in order to be able to effectively and positively drive the creative collaborative processes forward. Ultimately, it is the knowledge, experience, passion and enthusiasm of the teacher that inspires learners to be their best.

This study helped me to realise the ideal of creating devising opportunities for my learners that would inspire them. It has indeed become the roadmap I utilise to give direction to the implementation of the curriculum requirements of improvisation and workshopping in my classroom. The theoretical paradigms of action inquiry guided my research and practice throughout the duration of this study. No other research design would have suited my practice based enquiry. I would like to qualify this statement. When I say practice based, I refer to my design decisions and choice of improvisation activities and devising strategies for the Workbook (Appendix A), titled “Conservation: Devising an environmentally conscious performance piece”.

Throughout the design and implementation processes of (“my plan of action”) the Workbook, Jhanie van Aswegen monitored the choices I made with regards to the design and scaffolding of the learner resources in the Workbook; she offered valuable advice and consistent and thoughtful support. She became the willing participant in my mainly “self-reflective” research enquiry (Creswell, 2012: 586). During the design phase she helped me to keep the reflective and open ended questions short and to the point.

Whilst implementing the Workbook, I often sat or listened in when she facilitated the improvisations that I had included in the Workbook. Having her actively involved in the editing and implementation of the Workbook offered me the unique opportunity not only to learn from her teaching approach and to make changes to my own; I could also surmise from her practice whether the choices with regards to the sequencing of the improvisation exercises ‘worked’. I must say more often than not we were quite taken by our learners’ creativity. As evidence of her participation I took the liberty to annotate her suggestions and my thoughts on her practice (see Notes in Text Box: Appendix A and Appendix B). I am lucky enough that she discussed the efficacy of the choices of activities included in the Workbook as participant of this study and gave suggestions/advice as to how we could improve on the design and resource material in the Workbook for 2017 which will be implemented in Term 3 and 4 of 2017. In TABLE 7.1 I paraphrased Jhanie’s comments, taken down during an informal and reflective interview on the practicability of the Improvisation Cycles as part of the larger devising process.

TABLE 7.1 Comments and advice on future action³⁷ related to the Facilitator’s Copy (See Appendix B)

- Placing *Talking and Moving Statues* in the beginning of the devising process was a good decision: it is a very basic exercise; it helps learners to engage with the idea of physical theatre, a mode of performance which requires of the participants to approach characterisation from a physical point of view. Physical stances and gestures will relate the character and tell the story – this simplistic mode of performance helps even the most inhibited of participant ‘perform’/create characters.
- Scaffolding the activities into different Steps is a good idea in general. The first Step of *Talking and Moving Statues* asks of the whole class to take part; which places everybody on an even footing; learners don’t feel singled out; it gives them confidence.
- When learners ‘dynamise’ their statues, in the following Steps they already have the confidence to take their individual statues further; they have all laughed at each other; made ‘mistakes’ and experimented together; now they feel more confident to move forward.

³⁷ The action enquiry leads the researcher in a continues cycles of reflection and actions taken upon reflection on the evidence acquired; in short, research and actions taken will influence the researcher on “what to do next” (Kemmis, et al., 2014: 108).

- Some learners ‘dynamise’ their statues quite naturally and boldly at the start of the improvisation, scaffolding the concepts or abstract emotions from simple to more complex, give the more reticent learner the chance to catch up.
- Jhanie suggests that we start the improvisation with simpler concepts known to the learners, i.e. love, ‘Pokeman Go’ etc. and then incrementally build to the more complex and abstract notions of greed and hunger. Learner’s actions become more bold and daring as the improvisation progresses which runs parallel to the trickier and more thoughtfully created statues and related environments.
- Jhanie cautions against learners modelling each other; the facilitator should always ask learners to think of their second and third options, rather than doing the obvious, i.e. pointing a gun to illustrate the idea of ‘war’. This goes to writing and devising: the obvious route is not wrong, but should be utilised as a starting point to writing and characterisation.
- Creating tableaus is a good starting point: the images provides the outlines/ frameworks; when ‘dynamising’ the images learners can start colouring inside the lines. It give learners the opportunity to consider their characters’ actions and motives more carefully, if the character has something to say you give him/her lines to speak; or if he/she has nothing to say learners can give them a sound or a movement etc.
- When Step 3 requires of learners to work in smaller groups – a sound foundation has been laid.
- *Animalistics*: During Step 1 learners should be encouraged to over-exaggerate, to move and make sounds – they do not have to be statues.
- During this activity learners struggled to give humans character traits based on their perceptions of animals. The activity needs a bridging step wherein which learners should discuss characteristics of animals as a class, before creating human characters who are physically and vocally enhanced by an animal quality. A snake is a good example or a Rottweiler.
- Learners can walk around in the classroom when experimenting during this step.
- The last step of the improvisation Jhanie only used volunteers to perform, since it is a very physical and nutty exercise. Shy learners would not feel comfortable to perform in this style.
- Jhanie likes the locations included in the exercise, i.e. classroom, tuck shop queue etc. since these locations are known to the learners. It offers learners a new perspectives on these spaces and the ‘characters’ that people them.
- Learners struggle to negotiate the idea of status. The two key words, Jhanie feels that we need to add to the *Animalistics* as well as the *Three Images* and *Cop(s) in the Head* activities that could help learners to negotiate the idea of status are ‘submissive’ and ‘dominant’. Learners often equate status to money unfortunately: the haves and the have not’s...
- The *Three Images* activity follows on very well to the *Talking & Moving Statues* and *Animalistics*, since it relates to characters created from an image or a concept. The devising process starts with statues, which the learners then, ‘dynamise’; then learners get the opportunity to ‘dynamise’ characters with animal traits in an embodied manner.
- Going into the *Three Images* activity learners should then have no problem engaging with characters and abstract concepts that are related specifically to an image. They have worked with sculpted images in order to illustrate concepts and abstract ideas. And they have gained experience to reflect on the characters they portrayed, in relationship to the sculpted images.

Three Images now asks of learners to extend the sculpted images into a narrative: the real image moves or are ‘dynamised’ to become the ideal image. This exercise, Jhanie and I concur, has great narrative and structuring potential.

- Jhanie specifically likes the peer feedback element of this activity as well as the *Cop(s) in the Head* activity which involves the whole class viewing each other’s work; during the show and tell phase of these activities learners get the opportunity to learn from each other and help each other by offering ideas.
- Jhanie suggests that the question that requires of learners to discuss if they have come across general ideas, characters and narratives during the *Cop(s) in the Head* activity (see pp. 13 – 14 in Addendum B), should be included in the Workbook after each improvisation activity.
- Jhanie points out, even if it generates nothing that is really of use, the fact that we ask the question, requires of the learners to consciously to reflect on what they have created. It focusses there attention on the scaffolded nature of the creative process. Otherwise, they could end up putting together a random play in a day, right before the assessment date. Later on during the workshop phase of the process, we can tell learners to go back to the question in which they reflected on ideas or character that you have identified for potentially use and incorporate it in their play. It keeps them reflective of their process.
- Jhanie suggests that it would be more practical to have learners go into their final groups before the commencement of Improv Cycle 2 (see p. 11 in Addendum B) and that they should decide on a topic/environmental concern by considering the articles and resources they brought to class for the initial discussions in the beginning of the devising process. This action will pre-empt too much doubling up of environmental issues as topics.

Jhanie’s comments and suggestions added value to this study and I would not have been able to successfully implement my ideas if it wasn’t for her consistent empathetic support and creative input. The most valued comment Jhanie made during the interview, pertaining to this study is that all the activities served to guide, focus and support the creative and learning outcomes that we wanted our learners to achieve: Jhanie and I wanted our learners to perform environmentally conscious, physically realised, creative, entertaining and socially perceptive plays, and the activities included in the Workbook, according to Jhanie guided our Grade 8 Drama learners to do just that.

This study has inspired many devising workbooks that guides my teacher practice. It has exposed me to the pedagogical significance of creative collaboration and the positive life skills it engenders. It has opened my eyes to the unquantifiable potential of group creativity. I believe group creativity in the context of devising deserves further research. The quality and the dynamics of the interactions between group members as they negotiate creative decisions is worth further investigation. This can entail the observing of the negotiating strategies learners employ as well as the language they use to maximise creative output. Furthermore, future research can be undertaken to ascertain if and how drama learners honed in the practice of creative collaboration transfer their skills to other educational

contexts that require collaboration. In other words it would be worth exploring how the creative collaborative skills drama learners practise, may impact and influence other learners, not accustomed to creative collaborative processes, when they work towards a group goal. This research may confirm the validity of the inclusion of the subject Drama in schools that do not yet offer it as a subject.

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Appendix A

Appendix A

Grade 8 Workbook

Conservation: Devising an environmentally conscious performance piece

NAME: _____

TASK OUTLINE:

- Students will devise an environmentally conscious short play that expresses a topic close to their hearts.
- The performance will be devised in groups of 4 – 5.
- The performance piece will be the result of a 5/6 week devising process that will include improvisation, theatre games, class discussion and script writing.
- The script will be a combined effort of the all the students in the group using Google Docs. See HELP FILE.
- The aim of the task is to create awareness of the immense role drama can play in creating awareness of environmental issues.

• **DUE DATES:**

- Complete the Workbook as preparation for the Performance.

TASK 1: Practical Component (Performance week – Process)

22 – 26 August: Grade 8 North & South

29 Augustus – 1 September: Grade 8 West & East

TASK 2: Workbook

26 August: All the students are to have completed Workbooks up to p. 13.

TASK 1: What to do?	TASK 2: Reflection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring articles and images on an environmental issue that interests you to class. • Your group will create characters, a narrative and plot structure. • Improvisation and reflection criteria given to you in the Workbook will guide your devising process. • You will create a script based on ideas generated during Improv Cycles 1 & 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Workbook will give you step by step instructions with regards to the devising strategies that we will utilize in class to create your short play. • An assessment rubric will guide you to realise the process and performance goals of this integrated performance task. • Individual Homework Assignment: p. 13

Appendix A

Name: _____

Mark allocation Term 3:

Workbook: / 60 + /20 = /80 > /50 **Performance (Process):** / 50

Assessment rubric: Process

AS	7			6	5	4	3	2	1	
	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2
Performance Style/ Choreography/ Blocking: appropriate										
Sound scape/ Sound effects/ Music: effective										
Narrative clear & effective										
Use of space: motivated/ logical/apt										
Impact: memorable/ engaging										
Total: /100>50										

Assessment rubric: Performance

AS	7			6	5	4	3	2	1	
	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2
Performance Style/ Choreography/ Blocking: appropriate										
Sound scape/ Sound effects/ Music: effective										
Narrative clear & effective										
Use of space: motivated/ logical/apt										
Impact: memorable/ engaging										
Total: /100>50										

Appendix A

Assessment standards

7	Outstanding	80-100
6	Excellent	70 - 79
5	Meritorious	60 - 69
4	Satisfactory	50 - 59
3	Adequate	40 - 49
2	Partially achieved	30 - 39
1	Not achieved	0 - 29

DEVISING CHECKLIST: PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Compulsory Performance Conventions		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1. Narration		<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Song and soundscapes		<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Group Silence		<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Group reaction		<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Animal mime		<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Exaggeration		<input type="checkbox"/>
7. MUSIC		<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Tableaux		<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Movement		<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Mime		<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Poetry		<input type="checkbox"/>
12. MULTIPLE USE OF PROPS!		<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Choral speaking		<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: List adapted from a devising game called Contention Conundrum (Swale, 2012: 66)

NOTES:

Appendix A

LESSON 1: Class Discussion

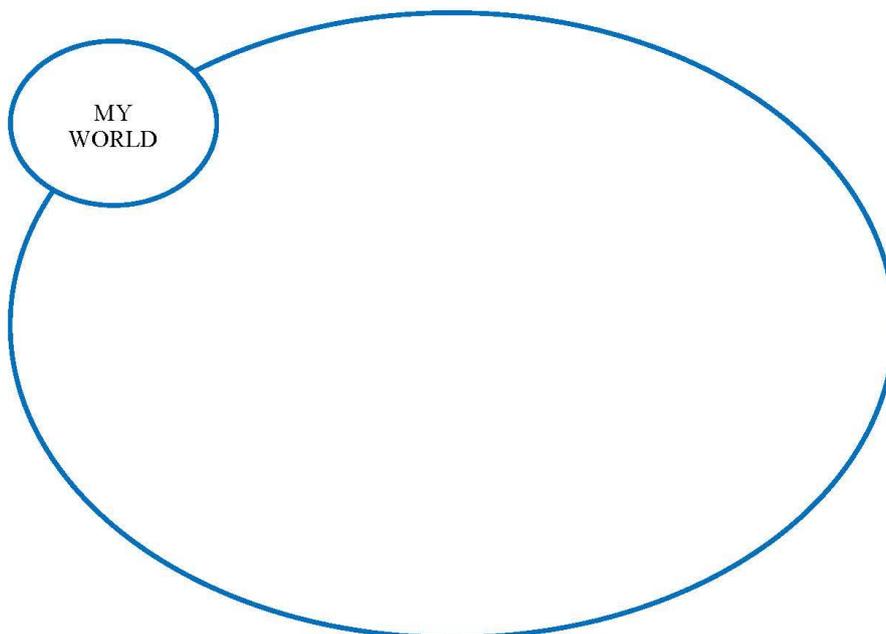
WHY DRAMA?

Why should we use the theatre to expose environmental concerns?

- Drama is a communal communication activity.
- It intensifies the experience of the participant (actor/actress or audience participant) and is capable of advancing the knowledge of the person beyond his familiar scope and surroundings.
- Drama is an effective and intensive informant and vibrant entertainer, and profound educator, by virtue of the natural rule that what one hears, he might forget, and what one sees, he remembers.
- Drama's capability to combining of storytelling, role-playing, music, dance and movement makes it an attractive medium that easily endears itself to the participants – the performers and the audience – members.
- The use of drama in educational activities is therefore a promotion of group consciousness, a phenomenon that seems to be in very low quality in our individualistic, mercantile world.

Source: Adapted from *Utilizing drama in the teaching of environment issues to primary School Pupils* (Nda, 2016: 142 – 143).

- 1.1 **Begin by considering the world you inhabit and yourself in that world. Write down the conservation issues that influences your life directly? (See Image File, p. 21. (6)**



Appendix A

The following questions are based on: ***The Horn of Sorrow* – video clips**

Links to follow: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzwtH2wKm_8;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ToxIFbKKdo>

1.2 **Class Discussion: Take notes!**

List the different performance styles evident from the video clips from *Horn of Sorrow*, shown in class. (4)

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1.3 **Do you think the performance styles you mentioned in the previous question suit the content and message of the play? Motivate your answer. (3)**

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[13]

Lesson 2: Reflection

2.1 **Reflect on conservation issues that the world faces today. (See Image File, pp. 21). Start with how these issues make you feel. (6)**

Angry?

Explain?.....

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Appendix A

Frustrated? Helpless?

Explain?.....
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2.2) **Describe the ideal world that you want your children and grandchildren to grow up in. (4)**

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2.3) **Carefully explain why you believe we face the conservation challenges that we do today? (5)**

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[15]

Appendix A

IMPROV CYCLE 1

Lessons 3: Games & Improvisation

❖ Start with Focus Exercises.

Boal: See Saw (Extended); Columbian Hypnosis + Extended version.

❖ **NB. Students should record the improvisation exercises for possible use later and/ or to track their process.**

❖ **At the end of this session students will divide into groups: Each group must decide on the conservation issue they want to present.**

Talking & Moving Statues:

Step 1

- Stand in a circle and face out. (The whole class can be involved in this part of the game).
- Students create individual physical images in response to a given theme, for example: **war, hunger, poverty, prison, greed, disease, and hunting.**
- They should do this quickly, without pre-thought.
- They are then invited to step into the centre of the circle and build images that are more complex.

Step 2

- One by one students can now add in their own still images. This could lead to an abstract group image or a **tableau** that is “dynamised” or brought to life by **adding sound or movement.**

Step 3

- Pairs or small groups can also create their own images, where they take it in turns to “sculpt” each other into a shape and then find a way to put these shapes together.

This is most effective if done without talking.

Step 4

- Present to class for discussion.

Source: Boal's Image Theatre (Adapted from:
<http://dramaresource.com/dramastrategies/image-theatre/>) (Farmer, 2015).



Appendix A

Reflection: Lesson 3

- a. Carefully explain how the **Talking & Moving Statues** exercise changed or altered your perspective today? I.e. On your role in society? On the issues we have been discussing? **(5)**

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- b. Discuss what you have learned from the exercise - About role-play? About physical and vocal characterization? **(5)**

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Appendix A

c. Were all the instructions clear? Did you feel uncomfortable at any point? Discuss. (2)

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[11]

Lesson 4:

Animalistics

- The following game requires of students to play at being animals. It is very important to note that the students do not transform into animals, they only take on certain characteristics specific to a given animal.
- The focus of this game is to help students to create characters.
- These characteristics can be **physical, vocal or status** based.
- E.g. A worm is a low status animal that may move slowly and speak with a muffled voice. The student might change his or her physicality by clasping their arms to their sides.

Step 1

- Stand in a circle and face out. (The whole class can be involved in this is part of the game).
- Students are asked to imagine an animal.
- They should then turn around and create individual physical images of their imagined animals.
- They should do this quickly, without pre-thought.
- This step may be repeated till students get into the swing of things.

Step 2 – Creating a scene

- The class is invited to become audience members. **They write the name of an animal on a scrap of paper.**
- **3 to 4** students can now become part of a scenario – a very human scenario.
- As the students step forward the teacher will hand each a scrap of paper stating which animal they should act like. The teacher will award each character with a specific **status: how, low, average Joe, royalty etc.**
- **Possible locations** for scenes: bus stop; classroom; tuck-shop queue; fishing boat; hair dresser; restaurant; passenger aeroplane; hospital. **Students may add suggestions.**
- Aim: Students should be encouraged to find a subtle balance between

Appendix A

animalistic nuances and human traits.

Step 3

Present to class for discussion

Sources: *Animalistics* adapted from <http://improvcyclopedia.org/games/Animalistics.html>. It is a snapshot of the page as it appeared on 30 Jun 2016; *Animalistics* (in Swale, 2012: 73)

Reflection: Lesson 4

a. Discuss the character and story ideas the Animalistics improv revealed to you.

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[5]

At the end of IMPROV CYCLE 1 students should go into groups to share notes, recordings and ideas.

IMPROV CYCLE 2

Lesson 5 (may be extended to Lesson 6): Games & Improvisation

- ❖ **NB. Students should video record the improvisation exercises for possible use later and/ or to track their process.**
- ❖ **At the end of this session students will divide into groups: The group members have to decide which members will be responsible for duologues or monologues.**

Appendix A

Three Images

Step 1

- ❖ **Students will go into their groups.**
- ❖ Students are given 15 minutes to sculpt three images or tableaux, with some participants being the statues and the others being the sculptors.
- ❖ The first image is the **Real Image**, the image of the current situation as it relates to the theme. E. g. The tableau might reflect a circus animal being mistreated by its handler.
- ❖ The next image is the **Ideal Image**, the image of the way things could be. E.g. The circus animal is well fed and treated with respect.
- ❖ When the Real Image is recreated and participants attempt to create an Image of the **Possible Transition** from it. E.g. One of the circus performers reacts to the mistreatment he or she witnesses and goes to the police. The police incarcerates the perpetrator.
- ❖ When this has been achieved the 'statues' return to the first image and then, in a series of freeze frames, "dynamise" the image to bring about the transition from the real, through the possible transition to end up with the ideal.

Step 2

- ❖ Dialogue may now be introduced to reflect the relationship between the characters as well as their feelings.

Step 3

- ❖ Learners present their images for discussion.

Source: Adapted from <http://www.creativitycountry.net.au/eclipse/workshop.htm> (Bailey, 2015).

Cop(s) in the head

Step 1

- ❖ Class Discussion: Students discuss the possible reasons that caused the conservational concern they are dealing with: this is called an "oppression".
- ❖ Relate this oppression to one character. **E.g. a fisherman working on a trawler staring at the deck writhing with fish; a poacher tracking a rhino; an operator of a bulldozer that mows down trees.**
- ❖ The "oppression" has to relate to themes discussed that created and/ or exacerbates the issue, e.g. poverty, greed, stupidity, desperation...
- ❖ **Step 2**
- ❖ Now sculpt and image filled with characters that are related to the main character in some way. The image can be realistic, symbolic or surrealistic.
- ❖ Over five minutes (which is a long time), all the characters in the image must voice their **interior monologues**, at low volume and without stopping.
- ❖ Everything that comes to mind, as characters, not as individuals; in other words, everything that that body, in that position, could think. The body thinks.
- ❖ For example: if I am put in an image where I am trying to steal bread, I must express all the thoughts of the person trying to steal bread, even if I personally am incapable of such an action.
- ❖ The only rules are that people must not stop the murmured delivery of their

Appendix A

thoughts and they must not move, everyone must stay frozen in their positions.

- ❖ The participants should try not to listen to what others are saying.

Step 3

- ❖ Learners present images for discussion.

Source Adapted from: **Games for actors and non-actors** (Boal, 2002: 207).

Reflection – Lesson 4 & 5

- a. Do you find role-playing easy or daunting? Explain your answer. **(4)**

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- b. Which person in your group surprised or impressed you today? Discuss. **(4)**

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Appendix A

- c. Explain how you can use or adapt character and dialogue ideas your group created in the improv today. **(7)**

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[15]

Formal Assessment: 20 marks

Homework: To be handed in during the next lesson

TASK: MY STORY

For this task you are required to write a short monologue and or duologue that will relate your story to the audience in an imaginative way.

Each group member must write a ± 2 minute monologue OR

Each group member must write a ± 3 minute duologue

Hand-in for the next lesson: group reading

Lesson 6: Group work

- **Group reading**
- Sift through all the recorded material
- See ***Finding Alice*** in the HELP FILE, p. 16.

Each group may formulate their own method of devising: see possible strategies below:

1. Choose a group leader
2. Choose a director
3. Choose one or more students responsible for the script
4. Choose one or more students responsible for the music, costume and stage design

OR You can collaborates on all the above choices as a group.

Appendix A

Rehearsals Lesson 6 & 7 & 8: Rehearsals

❖ NB. Students have to video record the rehearsal process.

Formal Assessment

Students have to polish at least one scene for process assessment.

Reflection: Devising

a. Discuss the scenes and character(s) that you enjoy most. Explain your choices. **(4)**

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b. What did you learn about yourself, in the devising process? Do you feel free and secure to share your ideas? Motivate. **(3)**

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c. If you could change anything about the way your group work together. What would it be and why? **(5)**

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[12]

Source: Adapted from Boggs, Mickel, & Holtom, 2007: 848.

Appendix A

Reflection: Process & performance

- d. Do you think the choices **you** made with regards to your character/ characters were successful? Explain. **(4)**

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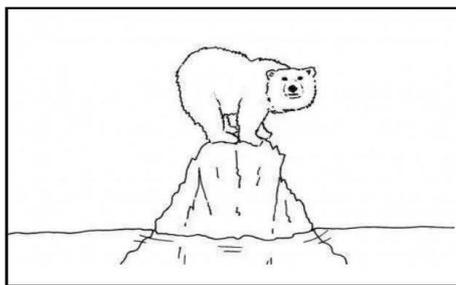
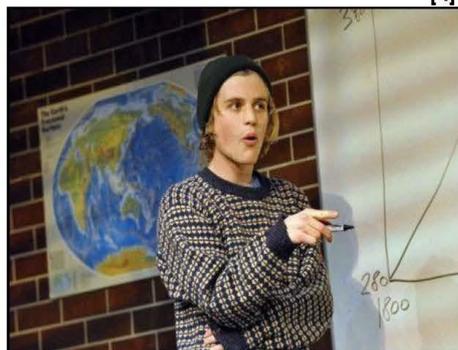
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[4]



Appendix A

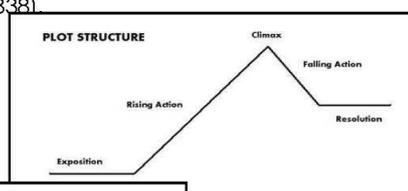
❖ HELP FILE

CHARACTERIZATION: USE THE CROW

- **Character:** Character covers who the people are, what they do, and what types of personalities they have. Give them names, occupations, physicalities—all the things that make up a character.
- **Relationship:** The relationship affects how each character behaves in his or her dealings with the other characters and the environment.
- **Objective:** The objective introduces action into the narrative by defining what the characters want. By trying to fulfil these desires, the characters become active.
- **Where:** The where is the location or the environment in which the scene takes place (Wirth in Boggs, Mickel, & Holtom, 2007: 838).

❖ **Telling a story for the stage: *Finding Alice***

(Source: Swale, 2012: 84).



Finding Alice

A game in which players retell the story, each time changing the order, to investigate structure, narrative arc and tension.

How to Play

Begin by splitting the narrative of your devised piece into five key units of action (usually the beginning, the event that changes the scenario, the crisis, the build towards the climax and the final denouement). Write a one-line summary or title for each unit, each one on a new piece of paper. Let's take the devised play *Finding Alice* by Ben Harrison as an example. The plot, greatly simplified, is as follows:

- 1) Miriam falls asleep in bed whilst reading *Alice in Wonderland* and wakes up in Wonderland.
- 2) The Queen of Hearts catches her with 'the book', which is banned in Wonderland! She tears the book up in a rage.
- 3) Miriam needs to read the end of the book to find out how to get home. She despairs!
- 4) She travels Wonderland finding the pages and piecing the book back together, before...
- 5) Arriving home, safe and sound.

Once you have titled the sections, perform a one-minute version of each section, playing them out chronologically.

Now comes the fun part. It is all too easy to choose a straightforward, chronological structure for a devised play. Often this will be the best option, in terms of clarity and narrative arc, but you may find a more unusual order suits your play better.

Try the following exercises. Firstly, put your five pieces of paper into a hat. The actors must pick them out in a random order and perform their one-minute scenes in this sequence.

Next, run them backwards, from five to one. Look at the way that the sources of tension and interest change when we focus on how an event happened rather than what happens next.

Finally, ask the actors to put the five scenes in order of importance. Try this sequence both in ascending and descending order of importance. How do the stakes change?

The Aim of the Game

This game encourages actors to experiment with structure. You may well decide that a chronological approach serves the play best. However, it is interesting to use this exercise to explore the way in which we invest in stories; is it how, why or what happens that arouses our curiosity and emotional investment the most?

Appendix A

❖ How to create a Google Doc.

There is a video tutorial that we can view in class.

1. Go to Google Drive

Step 1

Go to drive.google.com and log in using your email account.

Step 1-2

Once logged in, you'll be redirected to your personal Google Drive. Here, you can create and hold all of your documents.

2. Create a Document

Step 2

On the top left of your drive, click on **"Create."** You can choose between creating a folder to hold your documents, a word document, a PowerPoint presentation, an excel spreadsheet, a form or a drawing.

Step 3

Once you open your document (word doc above) make sure to give it a title.

3. Share Your Document

Step 4

After you're finished creating your doc, go to the top right and click on "Share."

Step 5

Type in the e-mail addresses for those who you want to share the document with. Once you hit "Done" they will receive an email allowing them access to your document.

Source: <http://heavy.com/tech/2014/03/how-to-make-a-google-doc-in-3-steps/>. It accessed on 26 Jul 2016.

❖ Writing Dialogue for stage.

The following is laid out in the way we like to have all scripts sent to us. Here are a few **Do's**.

Do:

1. Use Google Docs in order for you as a group to co-edit your script.
2. Use a popular font type such as Arial and 12 point size.
3. Single line spaced
4. Character names should be bold and CAPITALS
5. Character names contained in stage directions should be ITALIC AND CAPITALS
6. Dialogue is indented from the character name.
7. Stage directions are to be in italics.
8. Stage directions within dialogue should be (in brackets and italics)

Appendix A

❖ **Example script:**

ACT I SCENE 1

Set in 1950's style diner, "McDenny's", in the present day England. BERYL is sitting at the back of a "u" shaped booth. She is tucking into a large burger and reading a electricity bill.

Enter LYNDA, SUSAN and RODERICK

LYNDA: *(speaking to SUSAN and ROD as they make their way over to BERYL)*
...put your back into it man, I said, use some elbow grease, don't just tickle it, I want to see my face in it... Hi Beryl...

BERYL hides the burger under the table.

BERYL: Oh hi.

SUSAN: *(sits at the table at the left side of BERYL)* He was doing his best.

ROD: Hi.

LYNDA: I don't want to see any smear marks and don't bend the aerial or I'll stop it out of your wages.

LYNDA and ROD sit to the right of BERYL.

SUSAN: Lynda, I think you're being a bit harsh. Hi Beryl.

LYNDA: If you're going to do something, do it right that's what I say.

Enter waiter carrying a large portion of fries.

WAITER: *(To BERYL)* your large fries Madam.

LYNDA: Beryl?

BERYL: They're not mine.

WAITER: Sorry?

BERYL: No, you must be mixing me up with someone else.

WAITER: *(looks around the empty room)*

BERYL: I didn't order any.

WAITER: Oh, but you did.

Source: Adapted from <http://www.comedyplays.co.uk/cpv5/scripts/spf.pdf>.
Accessed 27 Jul 2016.

Appendix A

❖ **Devising Tips**

Devised theatre: ten tips for a truly creative collaboration

Do your research, don't obsess over plot and set aside time early on to explore everyone's personal objectives for making the piece.



Winston On the Run, a devised theatre show by

Fol Espoir.

John Walton

Tuesday 16 December 2014 11.10 GMT Last modified on Tuesday 16 December 2014 11.41 GMT

Britain may lay claim to some of the world's greatest dramatists, but solitary scribbling isn't the only way to create theatre. "Devising" is a process in which the whole creative team develops a show collaboratively. From actors to technicians, everyone is involved in the creative process. Since the pioneering *Oh What a Lovely War*, some of theatre's most exciting productions have been made this way.

It's both an exhilarating and terrifying way to work. I love the challenge of creating a show from scratch, but with this freedom comes a significant catch: there's no script; no safety net. I've spent most of the past decade walking this tightrope. From shows that have ended up touring nationally to flops I'd rather forget, here are some of the things I've learned along the way.

Be passionate about your source material

It might be a story you love, an injustice that enrages you or a question you can't stop asking – just make sure you've chosen a starting point that fascinates you. This curiosity will keep you alive to new possibilities, make you fearless when things get tough, and ensure you're always digging deeper. If you don't care, why should an audience?

Do your research

The more you know about your starting material, the freer your imagination will be within it. Research nourishes rehearsals, provides a huge wealth of material from which to devise, and gives authenticity to your final production. The latter is important; if an audience questions the world you create, it's almost impossible for them to relax into the fantasies you're weaving. Of course, if you're creating a clown show, ignore all the above; ignorance will be bliss.

Unite the whole company/ group around a common purpose

Set aside some time early on to explore everyone's personal objectives for making the piece. Then, as an ensemble, write a unified mission statement for the show. This might range from explicitly political aims to simply wanting to create a joyous evening of fun – it might even change as the project moves

Appendix A

forward. It will provide an essential framework against which you can judge every decision you make and ensures that everyone is travelling in the same direction.

Keep an open mind

Few things will choke creativity more than your brainy ideas about what you think will work. Admit that you know nothing, keep an open mind and listen attentively to the people with whom you're working. The smallest comments can spark Eureka moments, and there really is no such thing as a bad idea. Some of my favourite scenes were inspired by tiny glimmers in otherwise awful improvisations. It's often the most disastrous rehearsals that tell me where I'm going wrong. As long as you're venturing into the unknown, there's no such thing as failure.

The importance of story is relative

Some people swear that story is everything, but it really depends on the show. If I'm adapting a preexisting narrative, story will undoubtedly be high on my priorities. But sometimes it will only emerge once we start connecting the material we've made. In comedy, it's often just a framework from which to hang the gags. What's certainly true is that an early obsession with plot will close you off from many discoveries.

Always look for counterpoints

If your subject matter is serious, look for the moments of humour. If you're doing comedy, remember that it's probably not funny for the characters involved. Similarly, don't get stuck in endless dialogue; the way you tell a story through action, movement, music, design, sound and lighting is just as important as the words.

Everyone works differently

Devising doesn't have to mean endless improvisations. Let people create material in whichever way works best for them. Some of the best scenes will come when people are just given time to go home and write.

Don't be precious

Throw away your rehearsal plans if they're not helping, give your best jokes to another actor, consider moving your final scene to the start, simplify the plot-line, and mercilessly edit your show to the shortest length possible. I've never regretted any cuts or changes I've made to a show; getting the rhythm right trumps everything.

Stay optimistic and enjoy yourselves!

Things will inevitably go wrong, but remember to keep looking for the joy and inspiration to create. Stuck in a hole? Play a silly game or get outside and do something fun. You'd be surprised how many good ideas come when you're not trying. *John Walton is artistic director of Fal Espoir, which you can follow on Twitter @folesp. (Walton, 2014).*

Appendix A

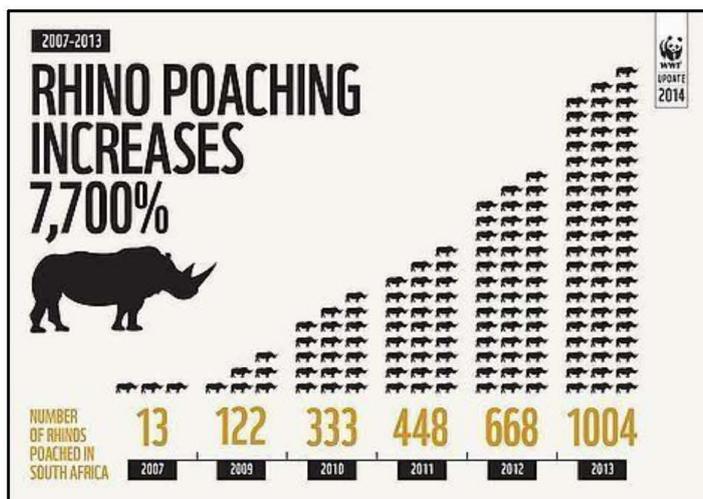
❖ THEMES/ ISSUES: Image File



Appendix A

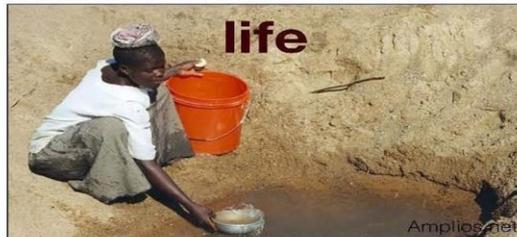


Appendix A



Appendix A

Whole **foods**, clean **water** and
clean **air** are not **luxuries**,
They are **necessities** to a healthy



What are you doing
that **saves** or **depletes** these
natural **resources**?

www.pureFOIEandBODY.co



Appendix A



Appendix A

Notes made on discussion between Jhanie van Aswegen and I during Stage One and Two of the devising process

PAGE 1

- The following procedure, suggested by Jhanie, will be followed when dividing students into groups. Students will be asked to move into pairs. The pairs will then be allocated one group.

Comments added on 26/07/2016

- Due to 3 official school holidays we are pressed for time. On the 1st of September all marks have to be on the system. Students will be marked on a process performance, rather than a final product for this term's practical component.
- We have to read *The Horn of Sorrow* by Nicholas Ellenbogen in order to give the students ideas and context with regards to performance and writing styles.

Comments added on 26/07/2016

PAGE 3

Observation:

- Whilst reading *The Horn of Sorrow* the facilitator must focus the students' attention on how the actors utilized the dramatic conventions on stage. I realized yesterday and tried out the idea today again, and it was a little less successful, but it did draw attention and created a bit of excitement. The younger students enjoy it when you as teacher present the conventions physically. I have a performance space in my class, so when I demonstrate how the characters create a rhino; or how character Skuwit breaks the fourth wall by handing his bicycle handle bars to one of the audience members, there is a positive shift in the class atmosphere. Yes, I try to entertain the students, but I also show the efficacy of the dramatic convention.

Comments added on 29/07/2016

- Observation: I just conferred with Jhanie about an idea I had this morning about utilizing narration as a shared action. It will hopefully give a frame work for the other performance devices.
- I am adding the *Finding Alice* game to the booklet, just to remind student of how they may break up a story into scenes.

Comments added on 29/07/2016

Appendix A

PAGE 7

- Improvisation exercises are the building blocks of devised theatre. Each Improvisation Cycle is designed to assist students in creating characters, plot and structure.
- Improvisation is a platform where students can share ideas and experiment.

Comments added on 26/07/2016

- I included this exercise because it helps students to physically manifest an idea hitherto only discussed in class. I divided the improvisation in 3 clear steps to make the facilitation easier.
- I specifically added dire circumstances like war and hunger etc. because I believe it is within these circumstances that human beings start to lose their humanity and may act unconscionably/ rashly...
- I will also add specific locations for the facilitator to use when working with this exercise.

Comments added on 26/07/2016

PAGE 9

- Observation: The facilitator will of course gage the students response to the all the improve exercises during the course of the Devising process. It is just good that students learn how to write about their experiences. There may be the one student who actually feel uncomfortable, but do not show it.

Comments added on 29/07/2016

- I chose to emulate the first step of the previous improvisation to help students to feel comfortable. It sets up a kind of ritual or pattern for them.

Comments added on 26/07/2016

PAGE 13

- This will be the final addition to aid the devising process. It helps students relate to how plot may be organized into scenes. Comments added on 29/07/2016

- PAGE 16

- I add this image to remind student of what to do to create an interesting story for an audience; the students may use an episodic or circular plot structure

Comments added on 29/07/2016

Appendix B

Appendix B

Gr 8 Workbook

Conservation: Devising an environmentally conscious performance piece**➤ Facilitator's copy****NAME:** _____**TASK OUTLINE:**

- Students will devise an environmentally conscious short play that expresses a topic close to their hearts.
- The performance will be devised in groups of 4 – 5. **As discussed students will first choose one friend. Pairs will then grouped together and individuals added by the facilitator.**
- The performance piece will be the result of a 5/6 week devising process that will include improvisation, theatre games, class discussion and script writing. **The indicated number of lessons are only a guideline. If you want to repeat and/ extend some of the games, do so. (Cop(s) in the Head may be excluded).**
- The script will be a combined effort of the all the students in the group using Google Docs. **See HELP FILE, p. 17. Take time to show students the video link when needed. We will only formally assess the individual duologues and monologues for the Term 3 mark.**
- The aim of the task is to create awareness of the immense role drama can play in creating awareness of environmental issues.

DUE DATES:

- **TASK 1: Practical Component – Performance week :Process mark Note: I placed this assessment (pp. 14) after the Cop(s) and the Head improvisation. Students should be made aware of the homework assignment at the beginning of the devising process. 22 – 26 August: Grade 8 North & South
29 Augustus – 1 September: Grade 8 West & East**
- **TASK 2: Workbook – Complete the Workbook as preparation for the Performance.**

26 August: All the students are to have completed Workbooks up to pp. 13 for assessment.

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TASK 1: What to do?	TASK 2: Reflection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring articles and images on an environmental issue that interests you to class. • Your group will create characters, a narrative and plot structure. • Improvisation and reflection criteria given to you in the Workbook will guide your devising process. • You will create a script based on ideas generated during Improv Cycles 1 & 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Workbook will give you step by step instructions with regards to the devising strategies that we will utilize in class to create your short play. • An assessment rubric will guide you to realise the process and performance goals of the • Integrated performance task. • Individual Homework Assignment: p. 13

Name: _____

Mark allocation Term 3:

➤ **Formal assessment up to pp. 13**

Workbook: / 80 > 50; Performance (Process): / 50

Assessment rubric: Process

AS	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2
Performance Style/ Choreography/ Blocking: appropriate										
Sound scape/ Sound effects/ Music: effective										
Narrative clear & effective										
Use of space: motivated/ logical/apt										
Impact: memorable/ engaging										

Total: /100>50

Appendix B

Assessment rubric: Performance

AS	7			6		5		4		3		2		1	
	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2					
Performance Style/ Choreography/ Blocking: appropriate															
Sound scape/ Sound effects/ Music: effective															
Narrative clear & effective															
Use of space: motivated/ logical/apt															
Impact: memorable/ engaging															

Total: /100>50

Assessment standards

7	Outstanding	80-100
6	Excellent	70 - 79
5	Meritorious	60 - 69
4	Satisfactory	50 - 59
3	Adequate	40 - 49
2	Partially achieved	30 - 39
1	Not achieved	0 - 29

➤ **The checklist below speaks to the dramatic devices / conventions utilised in *Horn of Sorrow*. While reading the play the facilitator would focus the students' attention on the implementation of these dramatic devices / conventions in performance.**

DEVISING CHECKLIST: PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Compulsory Performance Conventions		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.	Narration	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Song and soundscapes	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Group Silence	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Group reaction	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Animal mime	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Exaggeration	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Tableaux	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix B

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|-----|------------------------|--|
| 9. | Movement | |
| 10. | Mime | |
| 11. | Poetry | |
| 12. | MULTIPLE USE OF PROPS! | |
| 13. | Corral speaking | |

Source: List adapted from a devising game called Contention Conundrum (Swale, 2012: 66)

LESSON 1: Class Discussion**WHY DRAMA?****Why should we use the theatre to expose environmental concerns?**

- Drama is a communal communication activity.
- It intensifies the experience of the participant (actor/actress or audience participant) and is capable of advancing the knowledge of the person beyond his familiar scope and surroundings.
- Drama is an effective and intensive informant and vibrant entertainer, and profound educator, by virtue of the natural rule that what one hears, he might forget, and what one sees, he remembers.
- Drama's capability to combining of storytelling, role playing, music, dance and movement makes it an attractive medium that easily endears itself to the participants – the performers and the audience – members.
- The use of drama in educational activities is therefore a promotion of group consciousness, a phenomenon that seems to be in very low quality in our individualistic, mercantile world.

_ Source: Adapted from *Utilizing drama in the teaching of environment issues to primary School Pupils* (Nda, 2016: 142 – 143).

- 1.1 **Begin by considering the world you inhabit and yourself in that world. Write down the conservation issues that influences your life directly? (See Image File, pp. 21) (6)**



- **The articles and information on conservation concerns that students brought to class would be the starting point for a class discussion, before students work on their own.**

Appendix B

The Horn of Sorrow – video clips

- Since the students may be new to this style of theatre, discuss the performance techniques as seen in the clips in detail.
- Play the clips more than once to encourage deeper understanding.
- Students should be encouraged to take notes on key elements of the class discussion in general.

1.2 **Class Discussion: Take notes!**
List the different performance styles evident from the video clips from *Horn of Sorrow*, shown in class. (4)

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1.3 Do you think the performance styles you mentioned in the previous question suit the content and message of the play? Discuss (3)

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[13]

➤ **Lesson 2: Reflection – For Homework**

2.1 Reflect on conservation issues that the world faces today. (See Image File, p. 21). Start with how these issues make you feel. (6)

Angry?

Explain?.....

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Appendix B

Frustrated? Helpless?

Explain?.....
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2.2) **Describe the ideal world that you want your children and grandchildren to grow up in. (4)**

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2.3) **Carefully explain why you believe we face the conservation challenges that we do today? (5)**

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[15]

Appendix B

IMPROVE CYCLE 1**Lessons 3: Games & Improvisation**

- ❖ Start with Focus Exercises.
- ❖ Goal: See Saw (Extended); Columbian Hypnosis + Extended version.
- ❖ **NB. Students should record the improvisation exercises for possible use later and/ or to track their process.**
- ❖ **At the beginning of this session students will divide into groups: Each group must decide on the conservation issue they want to present.**

Talking & Moving Statues:**Step 1**

- Stand in a circle and face out. **(The whole class can be involved in this part of the game).**
- Students create individual physical images in response to a given theme, for example: **war, hunger, poverty, prison, greed, disease, and hunting.**
- They should do this quickly, without pre-thought.
- They are then invited to step into the centre of the circle and build images that are more complex.

Step 2

- **Depending on the size of the class; let half of the students sit out for this part; then repeat.**
- One by one students can now add in their own still images. This could lead to an abstract group image or a **tableau** that is “dynamised” or brought to life by **adding sound or movement.**
- **Here different perspectives can come to light. Students add to a picture.**
- **Themes and ideas relating to environmental issues can come into play here: facilitator can ask students for suggestions.**
- **Possible locations: dark alley; rural village; watering hole; “hunting ground” - veldt; beach; ship deck; forest.**

Step 3

- **Learners should do this step in their smaller groups.**
- Pairs or small groups can also create their own images, where they take it in turns to “sculpt” each other into a shape and then find a way to put these shapes together.
- **This is most effective if done without talking.**
- **Discussion: The smaller groups show their images to the rest of the class. A short discussion can take place where students share thoughts and ideas about what their classmates have created. Keep the discussion & suggestions positive. The groups may use this improvisation to extend their work in the later stages of the devising process.**

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Source: Bodl's Image Theatre (Adapted from:
<http://dramaresource.com/dramastrategies/image-theatre/>) (Farmer, 2015).

Reflection: Lesson 3 – Homework

- a. Carefully explain how the **Talking & Moving Statues** exercise changed or altered your perspective today? I.e. On your role in society? **(5)**

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- b. Did you learn something new today? I. e. About acting? About role-play? About physical and vocal characterization? Discuss. **(6)**

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Appendix B

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 c. Were all the instructions clear? Did you feel uncomfortable at any point? Discuss. **(2)**

[11]

Lesson 4: Animalistics

- ❖ The following game requires of students to play at being animals. It is very important to note that the students do not transform into animals, they only take on certain characteristics specific to a given animal. The focus of this game is to help students to create characters.
- ❖ These characteristics can be **physical, vocal or status** based.
- ❖ E.g. A worm is a low status animal that may move slowly and speak with a muffled voice. The student might change his or her physicality by clasping their arms to their sides.

Step 1

➤ Stand in a circle and face out. **(The whole class can be involved in this part of the game).**

- Students are asked to imagine an animal.
- They should then turn around and create individual physical images of their imagined animals.
- They should do this quickly, without pre-thought.
- This step may be repeated till students get into the swing of things.

Step 2 – Creating a scene

- The class is invited to become audience members. **They write the name of an animal on a scrap of paper.**
- **3 to 4** students can now become part of a scenario – a very human scenario.

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➤ **As the students step forward the teacher will hand each a scrap of paper stating which animal they should act like. The teacher will award each character with a specific status: how, low, average Joe, royalty etc.**

- **Possible locations** for scenes: bus stop; classroom; tuck-shop queue; fishing boat; hair dresser; restaurant; passenger aeroplane; hospital. **Students may add suggestions.**
- Aim: Students should be encouraged to find a subtle balance between animalistic nuances and human traits.

Sources: *Animalistics* adapted from <http://improvcyclopedia.org/games/Animalistics.html>. It is a snapshot of the page as it appeared on 30 Jun 2016; *Animalistics in* (Swale, 2012: 73)

Reflection: Lesson 4 - Homework

- a. Did you come across character of story ideas that you want to use in your play? Discuss in detail. **(5)**

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➤ **At the end of IMPROV CYCLE 1 students should go into groups to share notes, recordings and ideas.**

➤ **Here the facilitator can just focus the students attention on the Devising Checklist.**

Appendix B

IMPROV CYCLE 2**Lesson 5 (may be extended to Lesson 6): Games & Improvisation**

❖ **NB. Students should video record the improvisation exercises for possible use later and/ or to track their process.**

❖ **At the end of this session students will divide into groups: The group members have to decide which members will be responsible for duologues or monologues.**

1. Three Images

➤ **Use 3/4 students to demonstrate the improv.**

Step 1

❖ **Students will go into their groups.**

- ❖ Students are given 15 minutes to sculpt three images or tableaux, with some participants being the statues and the others being the sculptors.
- ❖ The first image is the **Real Image**, the image of the current situation as it relates to the theme. **E. g. The tableau might reflect a circus animal being mistreated by its handler.**
- **The facilitator may add more image ideas or ask the class for suggestions.** ❖ The next image is the **Ideal Image**, the image of the way things could be. **E.g. The circus animal is well fed and treated with respect.**
- **The facilitator may add more image ideas or ask the class for suggestions.**
 - ❖ When the Real Image is recreated and participants attempt to create an Image of the **Possible Transition** from it. **E.g. One of the circus performers reacts to the mistreatment he or she witnesses and goes to the police. The police intervenes/ incarcerates the perpetrator.**
 - ❖ When this has been achieved the 'statues' return to the first image and then, in a series of freeze frames, "dynamise" the image to bring about the transition from the real, through the possible transition to end up with the ideal.
- **Discussion: The students show their 3 images to the rest of the class. A short discussion can take place where students share thoughts and ideas about what their classmates have created. Keep the discussion & suggestions positive. The groups can now polish their 3 images – See Step 2.**

Step 2

❖ Dialogue may now be introduced to reflect the relationship between the characters as well as their feelings.

Source: Adapted from <http://www.creativitycountry.net.au/eclipse/workshop.htm> (Bailey, 2015).

Appendix B

2. The Cop(s) in the head

- **This exercise may be optional. If you have enough time, use it.**
- **This improv can start with a class discussion.**
- **Students work on the floor in their performance groups.**
- ❖ Students discuss the possible reasons that caused the conservational concern they are dealing with: this is called an "**oppression**".
- ❖ Relate this oppression to one character. **E.g. a fisherman working on a trawler staring at the deck writhing with fish; a poacher tracking a rhino; an operator of a bulldozer that mows down trees.**
- ❖ The "oppression" has to relate to themes discussed that created and/ or exacerbates the issue, e.g. **poverty, greed, stupidity, desperation...** ❖ Students go into their groups.
- ❖ Now sculpt an image that relates to the main character in some way. The image can be realistic, symbolic or surrealistic.
- **E.g. if you choose the operator of a bulldozer that mows down trees; his "oppression" may be poverty.**
- **The group then decides on characters that are closely related to him. His demanding wife; a child that is desperate to afford school fees; his boss that makes him work long hours; the group can also choose from a selection of animals that will lose their habitat. These characters will present the 'cops in the head of the protagonist'**
- **The characters created here may be extended to become 'real' characters in the ensuing days.**
- Over five minutes (which is a long time); the characters in the image/**tableau** must voice their **interior monologues**, at low volume and without stopping.
- **Arrange characters in the tableau with relation to their status and the influence that they have over the main character. The wife might be towering over him, shouting in his ear for instance...**
 - ❖ Everything that comes to mind, as characters, not as individuals; in other words, everything that that body, in that position, could think. Remember: The body thinks!
 - ❖ For example: if I am put in an image where I am trying to steal bread, I must express all the thoughts of the person trying to steal bread, even if I personally am incapable of such an action.
 - ❖ The only rules are that people must not stop the murmured delivery of their thoughts and they must not move, everyone must stay frozen in their positions.
 - ❖ The participants should try not to listen to what others are saying.
- **Discussion: The students show their images to the rest of the class. A short discussion can take place where students share thoughts and ideas about what their classmates have created. Keep the discussion & suggestions positive. The groups can now polish and extend their images.**

Source Adapted from: (**Games for actors and non-actors**) ((Boal, 2002: 207).

Appendix B

Reflection – Lesson 4 & 5 - Homework

a. Do you find role-playing easy or daunting? Explain your answer. **(4)**

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b. Did someone in your group surprise or impress you today? Discuss. **(4)**

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c. Did you come across dialogue, images or characters that you think you can use in your performance piece? **Explain how you want to use or adapt it. (7)**

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Appendix B

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[15]

Homework assignment: Formal Assessment

Homework: To be handed in during the next lesson

TASK: MY STORY

For this task you are required to write a short monologue and or duologue that will relate your story to the audience in an imaginative way.

Each group member must write a ± 2 minute monologue OR

Each group member must write a ± 3 minute duologue

Hand-in for the next lesson: group reading

Lesson 6: Group work ○ **Group reading** ○ Sift through all the recorded material ○ See

Finding Alice in HELP FILE!

Each group may formulate their own method of devising: see possible strategies below:

1. Choose a group leader
2. Choose a director
3. Choose one or more students responsible for the script
4. Choose one or more students responsible for the music, costume and stage design

OR You can collaborate on all the above choices as a group.

Appendix B

Lesson 6 & 7 & 8: Rehearsals

❖ NB. Students have to video record the rehearsal process.

Formal Assessment

Students have to polish at least one scene for process assessment.

Reflection: Devising

a. Discuss the scenes and character(s) that you enjoy most. Explain your choices. **(4)**

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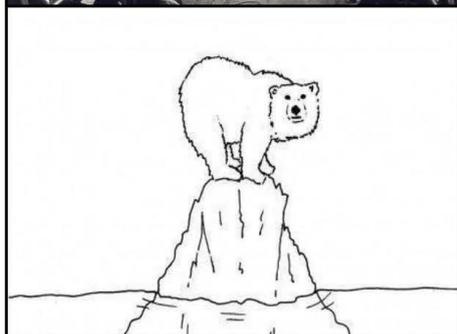
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➤ **Possible questions for class discussion post performance:** What did you learn about yourself, in the devising process? Do you feel free and secure to share your ideas? If you could change anything about the way your group work together. What would it be and why? Etc.

Source: Adapted from Boggs, Mickel, & Holtom, 2007: 848.



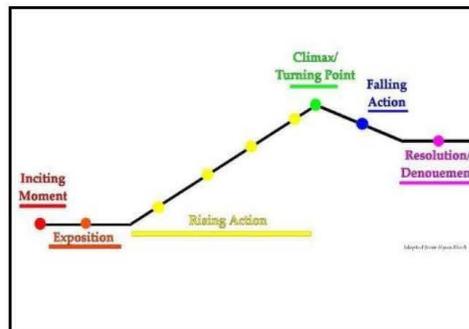
Appendix B

Help! FILE

❖ CHARACTERIZATION: The Crow

- Character: Character covers who the people are, what they do, and what types of personalities they have. Give them names, occupations, physicalities—all the things that make up a character.
- Relationship: The relationship affects how each character behaves in his or her dealings with the other characters and the environment.
- Objective: The objective introduces action into the narrative by defining what the characters want. By trying to fulfil these desires, the characters become active.
- Where: The where is the location or the environment in which the scene takes place (Wirth in Boggs, Mickel, & Holtom, 2007: 838).

❖ Finding Alice: How to tell A Story for the stage (Source: Swale, 2012: 24).



- **Encourage learners to use episodic structure.**

Appendix B

TIPS for Devising!**Devised theatre: ten tips for a truly creative collaboration**

Do your research, don't obsess over plot and set aside time early on to explore everyone's personal objectives for making the piece



Winston On the Run, a devised theatre show

by Fol Espoir

John Walton

Tuesday 16 December 2014 11.10 GMT Last modified on Tuesday 16 December 2014 11.41 GMT

Britain may lay claim to some of the world's greatest dramatists, but solitary scribbling isn't the only way to create theatre. "Devising" is a process in which the whole creative team develops a show collaboratively. From actors to technicians, everyone is involved in the creative process. Since the pioneering *Oh What a Lovely War*, some of theatre's most exciting productions have been made this way.

It's both an exhilarating and terrifying way to work. I love the challenge of creating a show from scratch, but with this freedom comes a significant catch: there's no script; no safety net. I've spent most of the past decade walking this tightrope. From shows that have ended up touring nationally to flops I'd rather forget, here are some of the things I've learned along the way.

Be passionate about your source material

It might be a story you love, an injustice that enrages you or a question you can't stop asking – just make sure you've chosen a starting point that fascinates you. This curiosity will keep you alive to new possibilities, make you fearless when things get tough, and ensure you're always digging deeper.

If you don't care, why should an audience?

Do your research

The more you know about your starting material, the freer your imagination will be within it. Research nourishes rehearsals, provides a huge wealth of material from which to devise, and gives authenticity to your final production. The latter is important; if an audience

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questions the world you create, it's almost impossible for them to relax into the fantasies you're weaving. Of course, if you're creating a clown show, ignore all the above; ignorance will be bliss.

Unite the whole company/ group around a common purpose

Set aside some time early on to explore everyone's personal objectives for making the piece. Then, as an ensemble, write a unified mission statement for the show. This might range from explicitly political aims to simply wanting to create a joyous evening of fun – it might even change as the project moves forward. It will provide an essential framework against which you can judge every decision you make and ensures that everyone is travelling in the same direction.

Keep an open mind

Few things will choke creativity more than your brainy ideas about what you think will work. Admit that you know nothing, keep an open mind and listen attentively to the people with whom you're working. The smallest comments can spark Eureka moments, and there really is no such thing as a bad idea. Some of my favourite scenes were inspired by tiny glimmers in otherwise awful improvisations. It's often the most disastrous rehearsals that tell me where I'm going wrong. As long as you're venturing into the unknown, there's no such thing as failure.

The importance of story is relative

Some people swear that story is everything, but it really depends on the show. If I'm adapting a pre-existing narrative, story will undoubtedly be high on my priorities. But sometimes it will only emerge once we start connecting the material we've made. In comedy, it's often just a framework from which to hang the gags. What's certainly true is that an early obsession with plot will close you off from many discoveries.

Always look for counterpoints

If your subject matter is serious, look for the moments of humour. If you're doing comedy, remember that it's probably not funny for the characters involved. Similarly, don't get stuck in endless dialogue; the way you tell a story through action, movement, music, design, sound and lighting is just as important as the words.

Everyone works differently

Devising doesn't have to mean endless improvisations. Let people create material in whichever way works best for them. Some of the best scenes will come when people are just given time to go home and write.

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Don't be precious

Throw away your rehearsal plans if they're not helping, give your best jokes to another actor, consider moving your final scene to the start, simplify the plot-line, and mercilessly edit your show to the shortest length possible. I've never regretted any cuts or changes I've made to a show; getting the rhythm right trumps everything.

Stay optimistic and enjoy yourselves!

Things will inevitably go wrong, but remember to keep looking for the joy and inspiration to create. Stuck in a hole? Play a silly game or get outside and do something fun. You'd be surprised how many good ideas come when you're not trying. *John Walton is artistic director of Fo! Espoir, which you can follow on Twitter @folesp.* (Walton, 2014).

Appendix B

Step by step instructions on how to create, share and edit a document in Google Docs.

There is a video tutorial that we can view in class.

1. Go to Google Drive**Step 1**

Go to drive.google.com and log in using your GMail account.

Step 1-2

Once logged in, you'll be redirected to your personal Google Drive. Here, you can create and hold all of your documents.

2. Create a Document**Step 2**

On the top left of your drive, click on "**Create**." You can choose between creating a folder to hold you documents, a word document, a PowerPoint presentation, an excel spreadsheet, a form or a drawing.

Step 3

Once you open your document (word doc above) make sure to give it a title.

3. Share Your Document**Step 4**

After you're finished creating your doc, go to the top right and click on "Share."

Step 5

Type in the e-mail addresses for those who you want to share the document with. Once you hit "Done" they will receive an email allowing them access to your document.

_ Source: <http://heavy.com/tech/2014/03/how-to-make-a-google-doc-in-3-steps/>.
It accessed on 26 Jul 2016.

Dialogue Format: Playwriting

The following is laid out in the way we like to have all scripts sent to us. Here are a few **Do's**.

Do:

1. Use Google Docs in order for you as a group to co-edit your script.
2. Use a popular font type such as Arial and 12 point size.
3. Single line spaced
4. Character names should be bold and CAPITALS
5. Character names contained in stage directions should be ITALIC AND CAPITALS
6. Dialogue is indented from the character name.
7. **Stage directions are to be in italics.**
8. **Stage directions within dialogue should be (in brackets and italics)**

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Example script:**ACT I SCENE 1**

Set in 1950's style diner, "McDenny's", in the present day England. BERYL is sitting at the back of a "u" shaped booth. She is tucking into a large burger and reading a electricity bill.

Enter LYNDA, SUSAN and RODERICK

LYNDA: *(speaking to SUSAN and ROD as they make their way over to BERYL)*
...put your back into it man, I said, use some elbow grease, don't just tickle it, I want to see my face in it... Hi Beryl...

BERYL hides the burger under the table.

BERYL: Oh hi.

SUSAN: *(sits at the table at the left side of BERYL)* He was doing his best.

ROD: Hi.

LYNDA: I don't want to see any smear marks and don't bend the aerial or I'll stop it out of your wages.

LYNDA and ROD sit to the right of BERYL.

SUSAN: Lynda, I think you're being a bit harsh. Hi Beryl.

LYNDA: If you're going to do something, do it right that's what I say.

Enter waiter carrying a large portion of fries.

WAITER: *(To BERYL)* your large fries Madam.

LYNDA: Beryl?

BERYL: They're not mine.

WAITER: Sorry?

BERYL: No, you must be mixing me up with someone else.

WAITER: *(looks around the empty room)*

BERYL: I didn't order any.

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WAITER: Oh, but you did.

Source: Adapted from <http://www.comedyplays.co.uk/cpv5/scripts/spf.pdf>. Accessed 27 Jul 2016

For the teacher. Please feel free to add notes. The task is just a guideline to enhance and serve as agency for performance strategies.

➤ **FURTHER READING**

A History of Drama Education: A Search for Substance by Gavin Bolton (in the ***International Handbook of Research in Arts Education*** edited by Liora Bresler)

Applied Drama: A Facilitator's Handbook for Working in Community by Monica Prendergast and Juliana Saxton

Devising Theatre: A Practical and Theoretical Handbook by Alison Oddey

Drama Games for Devising (2012); Drama Games for Classrooms and Workshops (2013); Drama Games for Rehearsals (2016) by Jessica Swale

Games for Actors and Non-actors (2002); The Rainbow of Desire (1995); Theatre of the Oppressed (2008) by Augusto Boal (anything on and by Boal really)

Group Creativity: Music, Theatre, Collaboration (2003) by R. Keith Sawyer

Teaching Drama 11-18 edited by Helen Nicholson

Utilizing drama in the teaching of environment issues to primary school pupils by Ubong S. Nda [<http://www.academicjournals.org/journal/IJEAPS/articlefull-text-pdf/692C82A40753>]

This is a wonderful resource on the relevance and importance of using Drama in education to educate students on environmental concerns.

Whose classroom is it, anyway? Improvisation as a teaching tool by Ronald A. Berk and Rosalind H. Trieber in the ***Journal on Excellence in College Teaching***, 20 (3), 29-60

This article gives specific insight into collective, collaborative and cooperative learning processes embedded in dramatic practice.

Note: these titles will put you on a journey of creative discovery.

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NOTES: TEXTBOXPAGE 1

- Jhanie and I decided to make the groups smaller this year, since the students requested it.
- The following procedure, suggested by Jhanie, will be followed when dividing students into groups. Students will be asked to move into pairs. The pairs will then be allocated one group.

Comments added on 26/07/2016

- Due to 3 official school holidays we are pressed for time. On the 1st of September all marks have to be on the system. Students will be marked on a process performance, rather than a final product for this term's practical component.
- We have to read *The Horn of Sorrow* by Nicholas Ellenbogen in order to give the students ideas and context with regards to performance and writing styles.

Comments added on 26/07/2016

PAGE 7

- Improvisation exercises are the building blocks of devised theatre. Each Improvisation Cycle is designed to assist students in creating characters, plot and structure.
- Improvisation is a platform where students can share ideas and experiment.

Comments added on 26/07/2016

- I included this exercise because it helps students to physically manifest an idea hitherto only discussed in class. I divided the improvisation in 3 clear steps to make the facilitation easier.
- I specifically added dire circumstances like war and hunger etc. because I believe it is within these circumstances that human beings start to lose their humanity and may act unconscionably/ rashly...
- I will also add specific locations for the facilitator to use when working with this exercise.

Comments added on 26/07/2016

- Jhanie started off the improvisation with positive themes, such as love and Pokémon Go. Great idea!!!!!!

Comments added on 02/08/2016

PAGE 10

- I chose to emulate the first step of the previous improvisation to help students to feel comfortable. It sets up a kind of ritual or pattern for them. Comments added on 26/07/2016

PAGE 17

- Another new addition. I add the linear plot structure. I would however love to have the students use an episodic structure. Paste in the Finding Alice game.

Comments added on 26/07/2016

Appendix C

Appendix C

NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE: DRAMATIC ARTS – EXTERNALLY SET INTEGRATED TASK – PART A



NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION
2013

DRAMATIC ARTS: PART A EXTERNALLY SET INTEGRATED TASK

Time: 5 – 6 hours

25 marks

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

1. This question paper consists of 17 pages. Please check that your question paper is complete.
 2. This practical task consists of 5 tasks. **However, you have the choice to do only Task 5 (the final product) for the assessed mark.**
 3. You have 5 – 6 hours to complete your preparation for the final task.
 4. This task needs to be completed under teacher supervision.
 5. Independent, creative thinking and the application of knowledge will be to your advantage.
-

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NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE: DRAMATIC ARTS – EXTERNALLY SET INTEGRATED TASK – PART A

TASK 1 PRACTICAL EXPLORATION OF POSTMODERN TEXT**BRICOLAGE***This exercise was taken from Jessica Swales Drama Games for Devising, p30 – 31.***Step 1**

In this exploration of a postmodern text, the teacher needs to prepare in advance. Various pictures, post-it notes and posters must be stuck around the classroom. (These pictures, notes and posters need to stimulate the actor who finds it.) The following stimuli could be used:

- A line or key word from the text.
- The name of a character or a character type.
- A theme, issue or thematic intention.
- An image from the text.
- A style of movement.
- A feeling or mood present in the text.

Stick these pictures, notes and posters all around the room and invite the players in. They should move around the space until they find a note. On reading it, they must remove it, stick it onto their top, and then continue the journey responding to the note in some way. They might simply begin speaking a line in various ways to other actors as they move around. They might, however, choose a more abstract response.

Step 2

Players get in a group (maximum 7 in a group) and sit in a circle. Everybody in the circle takes their pictures, notes and posters off and places them in the middle of the circle. Groups use this material as a stimulus for workshopping a five-minute performance. Groups need to discuss what kind of character, situation, issue or confrontation is suggested by the stimuli. The players must use the pictures, notes and posters, and NOT the play which they have studied as the stimulus for their improvisation.

TASK 2 TERMINOLOGY OF POSTMODERNISM

2.1 Complete the crossword puzzle on page 4, choosing the correct word from the list below for the definitions:

Fragmented; Deconstruction; Intertextuality; Mini-narratives (mininarratives); Pastiche; Irreverent; Polyphonic; Rhizome; Binary; Meta-theatre (metatheatre).

Down:

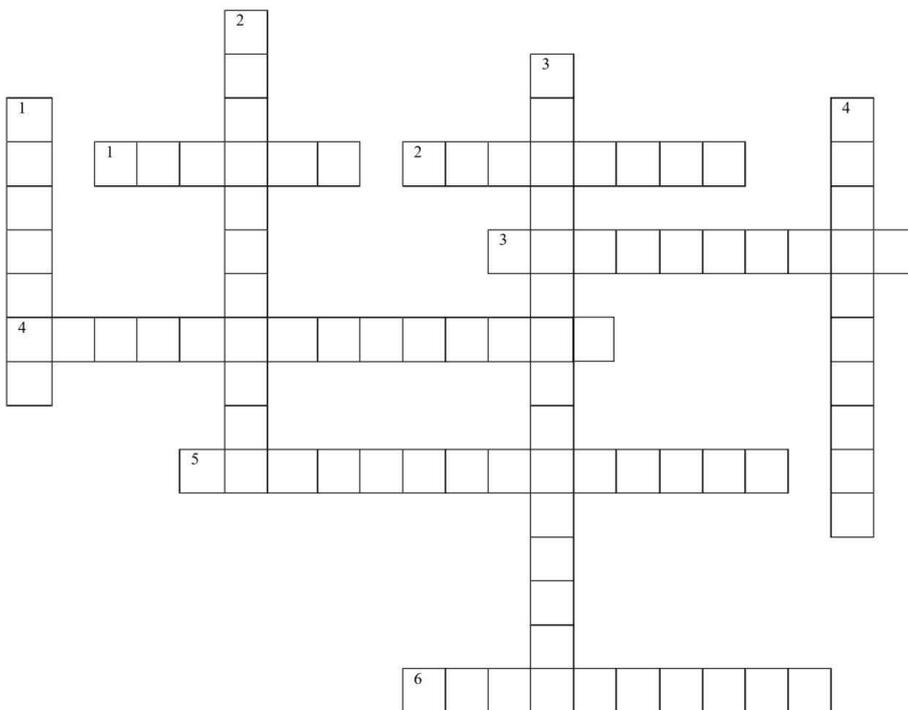
1. The root system of a plant where the roots grow shallowly horizontally. This term is used to describe the way *truth* and *meaning* of postmodern theatre is interpreted. Meaning lies on the surface, in images, in how we use and perceive things.
2. When the artwork reflects on itself. Self-conscious reflexivity within a performance acknowledging within itself that it is a constructed artefact.
3. The idea that a given text is a response to what has already been written, be it explicit or implicit. The reference to another separate and distinct text within a text.
4. Showing no respect for traditions, the rules of society, or religious beliefs. Postmodern theatre celebrates fragmentation; subversion of seriousness. It is playful, disrupts and deconstructs.

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Across:

1. In modernist times the understanding of the world and the consideration of what constitutes stability was constructed through comparing and classifying contrasting opposites.
2. Postmodern theatre which makes use of material from other similar works, especially in order to make fun of those other works. A collage/montage of different styles, genres, arts elements and disciplines; pieces of texts; bits of popculture, multimedia; mixed and put together to create a new work.
3. Taking a cohesive whole apart or breaking it into small pieces. Being divided or have its unity destroyed. Looking at or studying an object or concept from various and different points of view.
4. *Meaning* that is local, situational, provisional, contingent and temporary stories.
5. A philosophical theory of criticism that seeks to expose deep-seated contradictions in a work by delving below its surface meaning. Taking apart of authority systems; taking apart of belief systems – grand and master narratives. Taking apart of texts, reading a text from many different viewpoints and having different interpretations.
6. Multiplicity in the presentation of *reality* means that the narrative is told through many voices.



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2.2 Explain how THREE of the above elements are evident in the postmodern play you have studied.

1.

2.

3.

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The following table shows contrasting characteristics of Postmodernism and Modernism.

BELIEF SYSTEM		
a. Mini-narrative	vs	b. Master Narratives
THE TRUTH		
c. Scientific, logical, rational and objective reasoning	vs	d. Every argument about life and the world is an interpretation or a version, it is relative
UNPACKING MEANING		
e. Meaning is unfixed and unstable as there are no universal truths	vs	f. There are attempts at creating a unified, coherent worldview
ATTITUDE TO LIFE		
g. Celebrates fragmentation; subversion of seriousness	vs	h. Fragmentation is seen as being hopeless
AUTHORITY SYSTEMS		
i. Authority systems are hegemonic and hierarchical	vs	j. Authority systems are deconstruction and challenge of the authority of the <i>status quo</i>
ROLE OF THE AUDIENCE		
k. The audience has to unpack the meaning of the work of which the author holds the key	vs	l. The audience is included as an agent of meaning making
ORIGINAL AND COPIES		
m. There are no originals only copies. There is nothing new. Copies are just as important, and sometimes even more important, than the originals	vs	n. Only original artworks (not copies) are important
ANALYSE ARTWORKS		
o. An artwork is analysed to unpack its meaning	vs	p. Multiple interpretations of an artwork
BOUNDARIES BETWEEN ART FORMS		
q. Boundaries clear between different and separate art forms	vs	r. Hybridism, eclecticism, anti-genre, mix of styles, pastiche, montage, borrowing and stealing, intertextuality
DIFFERENT STYLES		
s. Realism, expressionism, symbolism, surrealism, Dadaism, Theatre of the Absurd	vs	t. Conceptualism, performance art, neo-expressionism, minimalism, sensationalism

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Arrange the above characteristics under the correct headings on the table below. Write the correct letter in the space provided.

MODERNISM	VS	POSTMODERNISM
BELIEF SYSTEM		
	vs	
THE TRUTH		
	vs	
UNPACKING MEANING		
	vs	
ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE		
	vs	
AUTHORITY SYSTEMS		
	vs	
ROLE OF THE AUDIENCE		
	vs	
ORIGINAL AND COPIES		
	vs	
ANALYSE ARTWORKS		
	vs	
BOUNDARIES BETWEEN ART FORMS		
	vs	
DIFFERENT STYLES		
	vs	

2.3 SNOWBALL

*This exercise has been adapted from Jessica Swales **Drama Games for Devising**, p 46 – 47.*

Round 1

- Give each player in the room a piece of A3 paper and a pen and ask them to find a space to sit in the room.
- They have one minute to write at the top of the piece of paper a short description of a historical figure, a cartoon character or a superhero.
- The more descriptive (physical, vocally and personality) the character description, the easier the character will be to play later on.
- After one minute, ask them to fold their character description over so it cannot be seen, then screw up the piece of paper (like a snowball) and throw it to someone else in the room.

Round 2

- When everyone has caught a 'snowball', ask the players to unravel their ball, leaving the top section folded – **they must not read the first character description.**
- They then write a description of a second historical figure, cartoon character or superhero.
- Players must describe a character from a different category than their first description.
- After one minute, ask them to fold their second character description over so it cannot be seen, then screw up the piece of paper (like a snowball) and throw it to someone else in the room.
- When this is completed, continue the exercise for four more rounds, keeping the previous information folded out of sight throughout.
- Each round, the snowball should be thrown to a new player.

Round 3

- In round three, players must write a description of a location/setting.

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Round 4

- Describe a social issue (a *Truth*) which impacts the youth in South Africa.

Round 5

- Describe the attitude towards the issue (attitude towards life) – With what attitude would postmodern artists treat the issue? --

Round 6

- Usually a postmodern play comprises a mix of styles. Choose TWO styles which could be used to devise/perform a postmodern play.

Round 7

- After these six rounds, everyone must toss their snowballs in the air simultaneously, and try to catch one.
- Then ask the players to get into pairs.
- Now they can unravel both sheets and read the six elements on each.
- The two players must choose ONE of the two pieces of paper with their favourite grouping of the postmodern elements.
- Players have five minutes to workshop a short (not longer than five minutes) play using all the descriptions from their chosen 'snowball'.

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TASK 3 GUERRILLA THEATRE VS FLASH MOB**3.1 GUERRILLA THEATRE**

Guerrilla Theatre, refers to performances done in public places focusing on 'revolutionary socio-political change.' Many of these performances were a direct result of the radical social movements of the late 1960s through mid-1970s. The term 'guerrilla' was inspired by a passage in a 1961 Che Guevara essay, which read: *"The guerrilla fighter needs full help from the people ... From the very beginning he has the intention of destroying an unjust order and therefore an intention ... to replace the old with something new."*

Guerrilla (Spanish for 'little war'), as applied to theatrical events, describes the act of spontaneous, surprise performances in unlikely public spaces to an unsuspecting audience. Typically these performances intend to draw attention to a political/social issue through satire, protest, and carnivalesque techniques. The group performances, aimed against the Vietnam War and capitalism, sometimes contained nudity, profanity and taboo subjects that were shocking to some members of the audiences of the time. Guerrilla theatre shares its origins with many forms of political protest and street theatre including agitprop (agitationpropaganda), carnival, parades, pageants, political protest, performance art, happenings, and, most notably, the Dada movement and guerrilla art.

This form of theatre was not spontaneous, improvised or impulsive, but it was workshopped or scripted, and usually went through a rigorous rehearsal process. Guerrilla theatre productions were performed by theatre companies/troupes and did not involve bystanders or audiences in the performance. The audience's task was to unpack the socio-political message because most of these productions were complex, multi-layered and symbolic. The Guerrilla Theatre companies believed that they could not proclaim peace, freedom and democracy if they do not practise it themselves, and therefore all decisions were made in a democratic way as a group. Every actor, irrespective of age and experience, had an input in the creative process. However, all creative input and brainstorming had to serve the greater political and social intention of the Guerrilla Theatre performance.

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3.1.1 Examples of Guerrilla Theatre:

In 1968, American soldiers bombed 'by accident' a primary school in Vietnam. Twenty children and two teachers were killed during the explosion. When this horrific news hit the newspapers in America, the Hecho Teatro Invención theatre group decided to create the Guerrilla Theatre piece titled *Let the Children Laugh* in Washington DC. Fifty actors dressed in long black mourning dresses and masks with female Asian features walked down the streets of downtown Washington towards the White House with baby prams. While they walked a sound system played a soundtrack of children laughing. While these 'mothers' walked through the streets blood flowed from the prams leaving a red trail of blood.

When the authorities at Potchefstroom University (South Africa) decided to close the Drama and Art departments, the Art and Drama students got together and created a Guerrilla Theatre performance. Most days the authorities at this university had lunch in the campus restaurant and the students identified this restaurant as the venue for their performance. While the authorities were having their lunch, a Drama student ran into the restaurant screaming: "Help, help! They are killing me!" Following him were ten actors dressed in academic dress wearing animal masks with daggers. They trapped the Drama student in the corner of the restaurant, pushed him onto one of the restaurant tables and 'cut his stomach open and started pulling intestines from his body'. (They tied pig intestines to his stomach.) The actors dressed as the 'academics' sat down at the table around the 'dead' Drama student and started eating the intestines. The next moment through the restaurant door actors dressed as undertakers entered with a coffin. On the sides of the coffin, was written: "Don't kill the arts". The undertakers placed the Drama student in the coffin and all the actors left the restaurant in a line while *Gaudeamus Igitur* played. (This is usually played during graduation ceremonies at universities.)

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3.2 FLASH MOB



A **Flash Mob** (or **flashmob**) is a group of people who assemble suddenly in a public place, perform an unusual and seemingly pointless act for a brief time, then quickly disperse, often for the purposes of entertainment, satire, and artistic expression. Flash Mobs are organised via technology (via videos, social media, or viral e-mails) to receive information on where to go and what to do. The key to flash mobs is their organisation. While members may not have ever met before they converge on an area, they are organised and coordinated via web sites like Flock Smart, where they can find details on locations and instructions.

In the early 21st century, a Flash Mob trend cropped up in major cities around Europe, Asia and the United States. Inexplicably, apparently organized groups of people began showing up in seemingly random places and behaving in odd ways:

- In Rome, a smart mob converged on a bookstore; the members insisted that shop employees help them find non-existent books.
- In New York, a group formed a smart mob and met up at a toy store, trembling in fear on the floor before a giant robotic dinosaur on display.
- In London, a group of Flash Mobbers showed up at a furniture store and tested out the couches. While relaxing, the members were instructed to call a friend to describe their experience without using the letter 'o'.

3.2.1 Examples of Flash Mobs:

Improv Everywhere (<<http://improveyouwhere.com>>) is a New York City-based flash mob collective that causes scenes of chaos and joy in public places. Created in August of 2001 by Charlie Todd, **Improv Everywhere** has executed over 100 missions involving tens of thousands of undercover agents. Some of their scenes include:

- On Sunday, January 13th, 2013, tens of thousands of people took off their pants on subways in 60 cities in 25 countries around the world for the annual **No Pants Subway Ride** event, all claiming to have forgotten their pants by accident. In New York, the 12th Annual **No Pants Subway Ride** had over 4,000 participants, spread out over six meeting points and ten subway lines.

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- Synchronised swimming in a public fountain.
- During the *Best Buy Invasion Mission*, 80 people entered a Best Buy store dressed in blue shirts and khaki pants—the uniform colours of Best Buy employees—and answered questions for customers (though denying being an employee of Best Buy if asked). While many of the store's actual employees laughed and took photos of the pranksters, the store's management called the police. After assessing the situation the police informed the Best Buy staff that they could not do anything except ask the *Improv Everywhere* agents to leave the store as there was nothing illegal about wearing a blue polo shirt with khaki pants.
- *Car Alarm Symphony*, took place in a shopping centre parking lot in Staten Island (New York) in May 2012. Among the most agitating sounds in the city are car alarms that do not seem to want to end at the strangest hours. To highlight this reason for urban annoyance this mission made 100 car alarms go off simultaneously. Charlie Todd of *Improv Everywhere* conducted agents like an orchestra as they pressed the horn or 'panic' buttons on their car remotes. The sound got more intense as more horns were added in waves, on command. Unsuspecting shoppers and store employees were surprised by this unauthorized and mercifully brief project. Car horns are not a pleasant sound, but the sheer volume and absurdity created a unique experience for the people witnessing it.
- *Improv Everywhere's* videos have been viewed over 268 million times on YouTube and their channel was the 23rd most subscribed (mid-2010) on the site. *Improv Everywhere's* most popular YouTube video is *Frozen Grand Central*, which has received over 31 million views. The two minute video depicts 200 *Improv Everywhere* agents freezing in place simultaneously for five minutes in New York's Grand Central Terminal.

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- 3.4 In groups (maximum 7 people) you have to workshop a Guerrilla Theatre performance. This Guerrilla Theatre performance has to protest against any environmental issue which relates to your age group and your community.

Give attention to the following, when you create and perform your pieces:

- This performance must be in the style of modernism.
- The choice of performance space must play the decisive role in the choice of issue, content, choice of target audience and style.
- The plot must be an allegory (parable) and not a literal storyline.
- The use of symbolic props and music/sound is one of the most important elements in Guerrilla Theatre.

TASK 4 FLASH MOB PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 Identify the different styles which the playwright/creators use in the play you have studied.

List all the identified styles and briefly describe their characteristics:

STYLE/ART FORM	CHARACTERISTICS

In groups you have to organise and perform a Flash Mob which illustrates the key characteristics of the above styles in a series of short scenes similar to *A Dramatic Surprise on a Quiet Square* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=316AzLYfAzw>) and *Gisele*

Bundchen Flash Mob at Sao Paulo Airport

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfgMmWac5sw>). You may use music to assist you in demonstrating each style.

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4.2 How to organise a Flash Mob?

Step 1: Decide what you're going to do for your flash mob occasion.

The success of a flash mob event is dependent on the originality, liveliness, and attractiveness of the event. Avoid copying a flash mob event that has been performed somewhere else. In all cases, the performance must be worked out in advance and either rehearsed or explained well in some manner (such as through online instructions) so that everyone knows their role and interactions with the other performers. The most typical flash mob performances involve such activities as:

- Choreographed dance: an example would be a large group all performing a dance.
- Singing something such as opera, yodelling, or a pop hit. Any style of singing is fine, but make sure it's interesting. An example would be breaking into song about the wonders of fruits and vegetables while in the supermarket.
- Acting out a particular scenario: such as lots of people walking invisible dogs on leashes.
- Mime: An example would be pretending to try and find a way through a wall that isn't there.
- Using an existing joyful event to spread love: An example would a wedding, graduation or anniversary celebration being taken to a street, mall or other public place to spread the joy!
- Freeze Flash Mob: All members become living statues and freeze.

Step 2: Organise your flash mob.

You will need willing performers to participate in the flash mob and for that, you can make good use of online resources. Use social media networks, emails, texting and websites to find people for your flash mob. You may also be able to draw on the resources of a class you're in, a performance or dance group you're a part of, or other groups of people you spend time with. Ask your friends and family if they'd like to be a part of it too.

Step 3: Provide clear instructions to your group of people.

The success of your flash mob event will require your participants to know exactly what to do. It is best if you can have a rehearsal beforehand, but if this isn't possible, then at least provide very clear instructions (either online or by email, etc.) as to what to wear, where to be at what time, what to do (for example: Be prepared to freeze, walk, dance, gape like a fish, etc., in front of the school library, 7pm), and how long to do the act for. If any participants need to interact together, it's best if they rehearse this for the sake of timing and accuracy.

- If the instructions are simple, such as everyone stand in one place reading a newspaper they've cut eye holes in, then the simplicity of the action will probably mean you don't need to rehearse. However, it is a very good idea for everyone participating to try and meet up somewhere prior to the event to quickly run over the details, what's expected of the event and participants, and what to do when it is over.
- If the instructions are complex, especially where scenes need to be choreographed and organised, then consider having a smaller group of people you are certain can turn up to rehearsals and keep fairly quiet about the event, rather than having a much larger and harder to coordinate group. About 50 people can be organised fairly successfully, but higher numbers mean that things start getting trickier.

Step 4: Arrange any props or costumes needed.

It is best to ask the participants to bring their own props or to organise their own costume gear (such as evening wear, swimsuits, wigs, whatever) but sometimes you will need to provide things for everyone (such as dog leashes and collars for an invisible dog walk).

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Step 5: Know the limitations of your location.

Do a proper check of the area you're proposing to have the flash mob perform in. There may be safety, legal, or physical limits on what can be done in the location and to avoid getting into trouble legally, it is important to not create unsafe obstructions, safety problems, or to hold up people in ways that prevent them from their usual business on non-public premises. While there is obviously a balance between encouraging people to watch and blocking people from getting on with their usual activities, you need to make sure that your flash mob would not be the cause of emergency or unlawful situations. For example, if your flash mob would be likely to block emergency exits, then think again about where to locate the event.

Step 6: Organise quality filming for the event.

It is definitely worth having the whole event filmed so that you can upload it to YouTube. Who knows? It might even go viral! If nothing else, it will serve as inspiration for other flash mobs in the future.

Step 7: Finish as if nothing ever happened.

Once the flash mob event is over, don't allow the participants to sit around and talk or to start talking to the crowd. They need to mingle back with the crowd and head off into the sunset as if nothing ever took place.

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TASK 5 THE PERFORMANCE

You have to organise and perform a Flash Mob which illustrates the key characteristics of the different styles evident in the postmodern play which you have studied.

Your Flash Mob will be assessed according to the following rubric:

	Highly Successful	Good	Moderately Successful	Needs Assistance	Poor	Unsuccessful
	5	4	3	2	1	0
Choice of venue						
Understanding of the different styles						
Demonstration of different styles						
Clarity of the illustration of different styles						
Element of surprise/spontaneity						
Group cooperation and ensemble work						
Choice of music and/or props and/or costumes						
Physical and/or vocal expression						
Use of the space/venue						
Impact of piece						
TOTAL:						50 ÷ 2 = 25

BIBLIOGRAPHY:[<<http://en.wikipedia.org>>][<<http://flashmob.co.uk>>][<<http://improveverywhere.com>>][<http://www.diggers.org/guerrilla_theater.htm>][<<http://www.flashmob.com>>]

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NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE: DRAMATIC ARTS – EXTERNALLY SET INTEGRATED TASK – PART A

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