

**THE USE OF CREATIVE DRAMATICS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
TO DEVELOP PROBLEM-SOLVING ABILITIES**

THESIS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of the Problem

Educators today are demonstrating an increased interest in the development of adults who can think creatively and solve problems. This training must begin in the elementary school. The problem, therefore, concerns the relationship of creative dramatics to the preparation of the child for problem-solving situations. The purpose of this study is to gain knowledge and to present methods and techniques for the use of creative dramatics in the development of problem-solving abilities in children in the intermediate grades.

B. Importance of the Study

Children of today need to be equipped to face situations which will confront them in the changing world. It is generally known that the universe is an open-end universe. Educators know that they cannot teach all of the facts to students; however, they can help children to mature in the methods of problem-solving. Creative dramatics can help the child to develop freedom and a measure of flexibility in his expression which enable him to face new situations with

confidence. Part of the value of creative dramatics lies in the contribution to the child's ability to think on his feet, to express his real feelings toward a situation, and to consider the reactions possible because of the problem or play. Since these ideas are sound, this study is an attempt to seek answers to the following questions:

1. What is creative dramatics?
2. What are the objectives of creative dramatics?
3. How does creative drama aid the child in the process of problem-solving?
4. Are there definite values that can be gained through the use of creative dramatics in the curriculum?
5. What is the role of the teacher in the guidance of creative dramatics?
6. How can creative dramatics prepare the child for problem-solving?

C. Description of the Problem

This study emphasizes the nature of creativity, the purposes of creative dramatics in relation to problem-solving in the curriculum, and the role of the elementary teacher.

Contemporary educators and businessmen are seeking answers to the problem of how more creative persons can be developed. Creative drama has been considered as one of the answers to this problem.

D. Procedure

A survey of the literature and other materials was made so that a program which included creative dramatics could be strongly recommended. Data for preparation of this paper were secured from materials found in the libraries of Southwest Texas State College, San Marcos, Texas; the Main Library, San Antonio, Texas; the Landa Memorial Library, San Antonio, Texas; the University of Houston, Houston, Texas; and the Little Theatre, San Antonio, Texas. Books, periodicals, magazines, and requested materials were used as references.

After a study of the literature and organization of the materials gathered, personalities such as Mary Agnes Taylor were interviewed so that their experiences related to this study could add to the material presented. Recall of the writer's experiences with children in the public schools of Texas and in the Sunday schools of Texas and Montana was also valuable. This study was limited to the field of creative dramatics in relation to problem-solving. It was written to be used as a guide to teachers and parents of children of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.

CHAPTER II

CREATIVE DRAMATICS: UNDERSTANDING AND PURPOSE

Studies by Viktor Lowenfeld have revealed that there are eight criteria of creativity which significantly differentiate creative people from less creative or noncreative people. The eight criteria of creativity are as follows: (1) fluency of ideas, (2) sensitivity to problems, (3) flexibility, (4) originality, (5) redefinition and the ability to rearrange, (6) analysis of the ability to abstract, (7) synthesis and closure, and (8) coherence of putting things together through organization.¹

A. Understanding Creativity

Geraldine Siks, leader in the field of creative dramatics, states that creativity does occur in science, in the arts, and in all human endeavors. In addition, she reiterates that there is potential creativity in every human being. Creativity is recognizable when in child's play a few blocks suddenly become a skyscraper, and in a mother's touch when burlap potato sacks become bright kitchen curtains.²

¹Viktor Lowenfeld, Creative and Mental Growth, p. 249.

²Geraldine Brain Siks and Hazel Brain Dunnington (eds.), Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics, p. 3, citing Siks.

In studying the difference between highly creative individuals and those with high intelligence quotients, Paul S. Anderson was convinced that creative talents do not look for conformity with teacher-approved models, nor do they seek to possess in childhood the qualities that will lead to adult success.³ The creatively gifted individuals consider high marks, intelligence quotients, pep and energy, character, and goal-directedness less important than do the individuals with higher intelligence quotients. Humor is also marked among the creatively talented. Anderson said, "It is as if the high IQ children seek and like safety and security of the known while the highly creative seem to enjoy the risk and uncertainty of the unknown."⁴

According to Alma Paschall, "the first essential for creative expression of any kind is a bold spirit, and a gallant courage."⁵ Authorities agree that everyone is to some degree creative; all children as well as all adults create answers to problems as they live.

In a recent article, Eugene A. Craig reported that hereditary factors play an important part in the development

³Paul S. Anderson, Language Skills in Elementary Education, p. 28.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Alma Paschall, Creative Expression, p. 3.

of creative abilities, just as they play an important part in other complex physical and psychological processes.⁶

These factors do not rule out the possibility of improvement.

Craig listed the following as obstacles to creativity:

(1) self-deceptions, (2) conformity factors, (3) fear of imagination, (4) fear of failure, and (5) fear of self-revelation.⁷

B. Creative Dramatics in the Curriculum

Creativity can be encouraged by the teacher who gives the child a variety of experiences and lets the child discover what something is all about. The teacher should also be interested in the child's work and make the time and materials available for creative play.⁸

Creative dramatics should be considered in the well-developed curriculum. According to Isabel B. Burger, educational techniques should be found which will be effective in the development of the major attributes of the well-balanced, happy, contributive personality. Creative dramatics can be a

⁶Eugene A. Craig, "The Psychology of Creative Writing," The Writer, LXXVI (August, 1963), 15-17.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Benson Srere (ed.), "How to Encourage Creativity in Children," Good Housekeeping, CLV (August, 1962), 136.

successful means of encouraging the well-developed personality because creative drama is democratic in method, teaches through conditioning, sharpens imagination and sensitivity, deepens human understanding, adjusts emotional tensions, develops resourcefulness and initiative, helps to build sound patterns of behavior, and stimulates body flexibility and ease in oral communication.⁹

Henry Saxe Tuttle, in a statement that pointed out the importance of role playing in education, said:

Next to actual conditioning of democratic conduct itself is vicarious experience approximating real life situations. . . . This type of art, which has been so generally treated merely as a form of entertainment, has educational possibilities superior to any traditional teaching device of the schools.¹⁰

In the opinion of Burger, one of the strongest points in favor of the adoption of the creative drama project in all group work with children is the warm reception accorded creative dramatics by the young people themselves.¹¹ When children are enthusiastic about what is taking place, ideas flow more freely; then learning can take place. Creative drama is more than a learning method to children because it is

⁹Isabel B. Burger, Creative Play Acting, p. 8.

¹⁰Henry Saxe Tuttle, Drama as a Device for Cultivating Basic Social and Civic Attitudes, p. 2.

¹¹Burger, op. cit., p. 6.

a part of them. It has been the most outstanding development of play situations in childhood. When a method of releasing the child's untapped resources is needed, then creative dramatics is the method most easily understood by the children themselves. The use of creative dramatics is not limited to the period of childhood because even psychiatrists use this method in psychodrama.

Another view is that of Mauree Applegate, teacher of creative writing, when she reiterates that role-playing, a type of creative dramatics, works faster and deeper than most classroom methods used to help children to think.¹² She states, "I have not found role-playing of local problems to be effective before fifth grade, but from then on it can influence group thinking more than any method I know."¹³

Anne S. Hoppock states in an educational bulletin that:

A classroom geared to release the creativeness of its most able children has been found to lift the level of living and learning for all of the children in the room. Money spent for the few helps only the few. Money spent to build fine school and classroom libraries, to purchase materials for investigating, experimenting and creating, to provide for experience outside of the school, to

¹²Mauree Applegate, Easy in English, p. 66.

¹³Ibid., p. 67.

supply consultant help brings returns for all of the children, including those who are commonly designed as gifted.¹⁴

C. Objectives of Creative Dramatics

Siks states that "adults look hopefully to youth because they hold the promise of the future."¹⁵ Scientists naturally advocate scientific pursuits; and artists want youth to experience and appreciate arts, not only for the stimulation of creativity but for the development of sensibilities. Educators look constantly for ways in which youth may be guided toward richer, fuller lives. Educators who know and understand the art of drama have posed these pertinent questions:

1. How may drama, which has expressed fundamental human needs since the dawn of civilization, become vital for children and youth?
2. How may drama be woven into children's lives in such a way that cultural values become rooted in society?

¹⁴Anne S. Hoppock, All Children Have Gifts, Bulletin 100, Association for Childhood Education International.

¹⁵Siks and Dunnington, op. cit., p. 3, citing Siks.

3. How may drama become an integral part of education so that children's creativity and sensibilities are developed?¹⁶

Another aspect of creative drama as described by Siks is concerned with the process of encouraging children to create informal drama through effective guidance. Siks quotes Sir Herbert Read's explanation which follows:

Cultivation of the arts is an education of the sensibilities, and if we are not given an education of this kind, if our hands remain empty and our perception of form is unexercised, then in idleness and vacancy we revert to violence and crime. When there is no will to create the death instinct takes over and wills endless, gratuitous destruction.¹⁷

Ward states that the primary purpose of creative dramatics is to develop appreciation for great art, not to train actors, and not to produce a play for an audience. She has discussed the following objectives:

1. To provide for a controlled emotional outlet.
2. To provide each child with an avenue of self-expression in one of the arts.
3. To encourage and guide the child's creative imagination.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 241.

4. To give young people opportunity to grow in social understanding and co-operation.
5. To give children experience in thinking on their feet and expressing ideas fearlessly.¹⁸

Whether for normal or exceptional children, the belief of many is that the most vital use of creative dramatics is for emotional release. Some authorities conclude that young children who have adequate emotional outlets are rarely found in psychiatric clinics.

Emotional release is offered by the arts. Music, writing, and drama direct the emotions into channels that bring aesthetic and spiritual satisfaction to the individual. Drama is unique among the arts in that the opportunity to be many kinds of characters gives the child not only outlets for emotions but also the chance to understand and discriminate among various ways of meeting situations. The use of drama develops a lasting interest in people and in human relationships which brings great satisfaction.

One of the basic needs of children is "to achieve." Because the arts add immeasurably to the richness and enjoyment of living, and because some people express themselves best in one art, provisions must be made so that civic groups

¹⁸Winifred Ward, Playmaking with Children, p. 3.

as well as the schools will provide children with opportunities other than those found in music, art, and writing.¹⁹ An illustration of how a child finds himself in one or another of the arts follows:

"It seemed as if I could never quite measure up," she wrote. In sports, so important to children of the middle grades, she was hopeless. In running games "I was always the first one caught, or if I were 'it' I could never catch anyone else. When our gym class played baseball I couldn't hit the baseball nor throw it properly. I was the last one chosen on any team."

Then when she was in the sixth grade her family moved to a town where she was exposed to creative dramatics. "Here was something I could do!" she wrote. "Not only that but when in the eighth grade our class was to do a demonstration of a creative scene . . . I was actually chosen--me--not by the teacher but by the students. . . . It was one of the most important things that ever happened to me."²⁰

If the individual is to become a creative thinker, the wonderful imagination with which he is endowed must be exercised. As a result of the constant influence upon the child to adjust to the group, because of the strong emphasis on social understanding, the development of the unique personality of every child has been neglected. There should be a balance between the two. Education is in need of a ✓ recipe for distinction which could then produce more great leaders, astronauts, preachers, composers, and scientists.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 5.

²⁰Ibid., p. 6.

Competition in business and industry has forced employers to realize that ideas are what count most in economic supremacy, and that their most valuable employees are men and women with creative qualities. The best time to begin cultivating the creative qualities is during the intermediate school years when imagination is fresh and strong.

Experience in drama makes a child more sensitive to the thoughts and feelings of others. He grows steadily in his comprehension of emotional conflicts. Along with this growth comes an ability to adjust himself to the boys and girls who are co-operating with him in the creation of the play. The discipline that the child receives when he has to subordinate his own dramatic ideas because other children do not agree, the sustained effort that he makes to help to carry the project through to completion, the joy that he experiences because he has contributed his part--all mean that he is learning to co-operate. As one psychologist has stated, "In team-work he learns to get along with people."²¹

To elementary children dramatics helps them respect their own thoughts and feelings and to stand before the group with ideas that are their own. Children are also

²¹John Jacob Brooke Morgan, Psychology of the Unadjusted School Child, p. 21.

likely to be more sensitive to the thoughts and feelings of others, a requisite for real communication.

Anderson seems convinced that creative dramatics needs consideration because one of the most serious uses of dramatic play is to help children with personality problems. A boy with effeminate traits may develop more "manliness" by playing the role of a cowboy. A girl who lacks grace may gain a measure of grace when she is cast as a beautiful princess.²²

Calvin W. Taylor, editor of the book Creativity: Progress and Potential, has reported the following:

Research concerning facilitators of creativity among young children is rather sparse. The Union College Studies in Character Education (1954) found a significant relationship between increase in the number of the possessions of two- and three-year-olds and increase in dramatic and pretend play (with props). Markey (1935), on the basis of her observation of children in nursery school, concluded that more adult-directed imaginative activities and more closely supervised creative activities at earlier levels might better foster the development of creativity than undirected freedom of expression.²³

Lowenfeld, Siks, Ward, and other authorities agree that there is potential creativity in every human being.

²²Anderson, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

²³Calvin W. Taylor (ed.), Creativity: Progress and Potential, p. 80.

Creatively gifted children generally regard outstanding grades, intelligence quotients, vitality, character, and achievement as of less importance than do children with high intelligence quotients. As has been stated, one of the basic needs of children is "to achieve." Provision must be made to provide children with opportunities to develop in all areas, and not just in the basic labeled arts of music, art, and writing.

CHAPTER III

PROBLEM-SOLVING: UNDERSTANDING AND OBJECTIVES

As an aid in the comprehension of the relationship between creative dramatics and problem-solving, a study of types of problem-solving and objectives will be presented. This material was gathered from various books and printed materials from companies interested in the development of creative abilities in individuals.

A situation in which doubts exist with no clear-cut, known answer constitutes a problem. An article by Evalyn Rappaport states that critical thinking is "active solving of a problem in the light of its causes and critically searching for valid conclusions to assist us in the selection of the most intelligent solution."¹ In fact, a problem comes into existence when things happen differently from what one expects. The relationship of creative drama and problem-solving could begin with the awareness that a problem exists or a situation needs a different approach. When it is recognized as such, then evaluation must take place.

¹Lavone Agnes Hanna, Gladys L. Porter, and Neva Hagaman, Unit Teaching in the Elementary School, p. 220, citing Rappaport.

A. Understanding Problem-Solving

Virgil Logan and Lillian M. Logan point out that problem-solving is important as a means of directing learning experiences because it provides an apprenticeship for adult citizenship through life in a classroom in which the democratic principles and everyday behavior are learned by thought-provoking activities. There is no problem for an individual unless he appreciates the need for thinking that has some novel aspects. The change in behavior is the novel aspect of his response.²

In the new field of Psycho-Cybernetics, Maxwell Maltz, famous plastic surgeon, openly discusses the discovery that the "self-image" represents a breakthrough in psychology and the field of creative personality. Maltz theorizes:

Your nervous system cannot tell the difference between an imagined experience and a "real" experience. In either case, it reacts automatically to information which you give to it from your forebrain.

Your nervous system reacts appropriately to what "you" think or imagine to be true.³

²Virgil Logan and Lillian M. Logan, Teaching the Elementary School Child, p. 194.

³Maxwell Maltz, Psycho-Cybernetics, p. 29.

It would be impossible for schools to consider all problems that adults and children might meet; therefore, the school must teach its students a method of solving problems.⁴ Allen M. Schmuller surmises that the best recommendation for the use of units of work in a democratic schoolroom is that units are a series of experiences set up to answer problems. He also believes that their use tends to develop critical thinking.⁵

Schmuller feels that students could be taught how to work problems of content by many different strategies and could be shown how to switch strategies while the students are still learning subject matter. It is believed that students can learn content through the use of different thinking and learning processes. Also, the entire curriculum could deliberately be developed so that the students could experience every one of these important thinking and learning processes while they are simultaneously growing in subject-matter knowledge.⁶

Characteristics that must be present to make a problem one which, in the minds of the children, is truly a problem

⁴Ruby H. Warner, The Child and His Elementary School World, p. 228.

⁵Allen M. Schmuller, The Mechanics of Learning, p. 95.

⁶Ibid.

are listed by Hanna, Porter, and Hagaman as (1) one that has created within the child or children a feeling of frustration or confusion, (2) a feeling that a solution is needed, and (3) a problem that generates interest in the related activities so that a solution can be reached.⁷

Schmuller has written the following: "The new and the unknown he [John Dewey] said may be presented to the learner but he only comes to understand it when it has meaning for him . . . mere acceptance is never a substitute for knowledge."⁸

Neva Hagaman, in collaboration with Hanna and Porter, concludes that, although it is neither necessary nor advisable to point out to the children the specific steps involved in problem-solving, there is a standard procedure.⁹ The generally accepted steps to problem-solving are these:

1. Recognizing and defining the problem
2. Analyzing the problem into its basic elements and forming tentative hypotheses
3. Gathering pertinent data
4. Organizing, verifying, and interpreting data

⁷Hanna, Porter, and Hagaman, op. cit., p. 214.

⁸Schmuller, op. cit., p. 93.

⁹Hanna, Porter, and Hagaman, op. cit., p. 214.

5. Forming conclusions
6. Applying conclusions¹⁰

Herbert J. Klausmeier contends that as an encouragement to each child to make his contributions toward the solution of the problem, and as an aid to the teacher in an evaluation of the students, each child should be asked to write in his own words about the problem. He should include what he feels the problem is and how he, as an individual, intends to obtain and record results. The class then should, with the teacher's aid, write the problem in a positive way, in terms which the children as a group understand and which indicate the tension that the problem causes them to feel. The next step is that of listing the various suggested solutions of all of the children, regardless of whether they are practical or preposterous. One by one the children might discuss the ideas suggested. If they are possible suggestions about which the class is not certain, they are left on the chalkboard; if they are suggestions that the class believes to be untrue or impossible, they are crossed off or erased from the chalkboard.¹¹ It would also be a good idea to "role-play" or dramatize some of the most accepted solutions to see other

¹⁰Ibid., p. 213.

¹¹Herbert J. Klausmeier and others, Teaching in the Elementary School, p. 420.

possibilities or the best solution to the problem. This procedure would have to be according to the desired results accepted by the class as a whole.

Another view of this method of role-playing is given by Marston, who said: "There's only one way I know to project your practical knowledge beyond your present occupation and that is rehearsal planning."¹²

Maltz gives the following illustration of Charles B. Roth, who wrote How to Make \$25,000 a Year Selling:

"And what is this magic that accomplishes so much for salesmen?

"It is something called role-playing, and you should know about it, because if you will let it, it may help you to double your sales.

"What is role-playing?

"Well, it is simply imagining yourself in various sales situations, then solving them in your mind, until you know what to say and what to do whenever the situation comes up in real life.

"It is what is called on the football field 'skull practice.'

"The reason why it accomplishes so much is that selling is simply a matter of situations.

"One is created every time you talk to a customer. He says something or asks a question or raises an objection. If you always know how to

¹²Maltz, op. cit., p. 34.

counter what he says or answer his question or handle the objection, you make sales. . . .

"No matter what the situation is, you can prepare for it beforehand by means of imagining yourself and your prospect face to face while he is raising objections and creating problems and you are handling them properly."¹³

The following table, given by Viktor Lowenfeld in Chapter I of his book Creative and Mental Growth, has been enlarged to show the relationship of creative dramatics, role-playing, and rehearsal planning to problem-solving.

There are a large number of ways the students can gather pertinent information. Of course, the number of ways will vary with the grade level of the students; but among them are reading, looking at pictures, seeing films, making field trips, doing experiments, talking to someone who knows, and making surveys. The students then need to determine whether the information they have obtained matches or backs up the suggestions which have already been submitted. Pertinent information must be organized in usable order.¹⁴ Probably in a discussion or role-playing period, students will determine whether the information is sufficient to solve the problem satisfactorily. There is no way that pupils can learn to

¹³Ibid., pp. 33-34.

¹⁴Hanna, Porter, and Hagaman, op. cit., p. 215.

TABLE I
ANALYSIS OF CREATIVE DRAMATICS AND PROBLEM-SOLVING

Imitation	Contrasted with Self-Expression	Compared with Solutions
Expression according to strange level	Expression according to child's own level	Sincerity of purpose
Dependent thinking	Independent thinking	Scientific and impersonal thinking
Frustration	Emotional outlet	Respect for the rights and needs of others
Inhibitions and restrictions	Freedom and flexibility	Ability to see another point of view
Going along set patterns.	Easy adjustment to new situations	Willingness to consider opinions of others
Leaning toward others, dependency, stiffness .	Progress, success, happiness	Friendliness**

*Viktor Lowenfeld, Creative and Mental Growth, pp. 7-8.

**Roy M. Hall and Vernon L. Armstrong, Southwestern Cooperative Program in Educational Administration, p. 4.

These items were rearranged to show the relationship between creative
dramatics and problem-solving.

lead their own groups in discussion except by experience in leading them through role-playing, creative drama, or seminars.

Roy M. Hall and Vernon L. Armstrong, in a discussion at the Lake Murray Conference, decided that certain questions were important when the solution of a problem was being considered. Some questions that could be considered important are as follows:

1. What is the full scope of the situation?
2. Who and what are involved?
3. What democratic attitudes and values are inherent in the case?
4. What would one need to know to meet this problem intelligently?
5. How much knowledge is available, and how much is to be developed?
6. What skills, processes, and techniques are necessary to its solution?¹⁵

Hall and Armstrong reported the following as results from problem-solving studies:

1. Increased understanding of the involvements and of the implications of specific situations.

¹⁵Roy M. Hall and Vernon L. Armstrong, Southwestern Cooperative Program in Educational Administration, p. 4.

2. Increased likelihood of the use of logic to meet situations.
3. A larger reservoir of approaches to various problems.
4. An understanding of the content in which these situations develop and are solved.
5. Higher correlation between democratic principles and every-day behavior.¹⁶

In discussing the results, Hanna reiterates that the teacher needs to be on hand to help the children evaluate the solution in terms of their problem. Arriving at a group conclusion or decision does not necessarily mean taking a vote. Group consensus may mean a compromise and the use of part or all of several proposals. It is important that even elementary school children recognize the place of the minority in a democracy and the fact that people sometimes draw different conclusions from the same set of facts.¹⁷

The activity in which the children were involved when the problem arose should be continued in order that the solution can be applied. Children need to observe the results of their own decisions. It is in this way that they learn from their successes and failures. According to Hanna, many experiences with problem-solving will give the children

¹⁶Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁷Hanna, Porter, and Hagaman, op. cit., pp. 217-218.

control over the processes of their thinking, and these skills will be implicit in their behavior. It is through this process of thinking as individuals and in groups that the children will grow into the kind of maturity that will equip them to handle the problems of the complex world.¹⁸

Mauree Applegate affirms the following by saying, "The school child, the adolescent youth, and the adult need new respect for facts, since only facts can lead to the truth, and only the truth can keep us free."¹⁹ Harold H. Titus gives the following as intelligent, mature steps in the solution of a problem:

(1) He stops to think about the problem before making a decision. He might have decided to accept or reject the offer on immediate impulse. (2) He makes a genuine and intelligent attempt to discover all the relevant factors in the situation. As a result of this, his decision is made with more facts in mind than would have been the case otherwise. (3) He tries to weigh the relative merits of the alternative possibilities. (4) He judges the case on the basis of immediate interests. (5) He takes into account the social effects of his decision, not merely his personal interests. (6) He seeks advice from sources which he thinks may throw additional light on the problem. (7) The final decision is his own. It is made on the basis of principles, on the basis of a scale of values.²⁰

¹⁸Ibid., p. 213.

¹⁹Mauree Applegate, Everybody's Business--Our Children, p. 136, citing Joseph Hart, Mind in Transition, p. 362.

²⁰Harold H. Titus, Ethics for Today, p. 193.

Virgil Logan and Lillian M. Logan conclude that the final sequence of events in problem-solving would be to choose the best solutions and to carry out or recommend the chosen solutions. These questions could be asked in the evaluation of a problem to be solved:

1. Have we defined the problem clearly enough so that it is understood by the children?
2. Is the problem one for which the children see a need for a solution?
3. Does the problem have several possible solutions?
4. Will it motivate children to help in planning, collecting, evaluating, and organizing the data?
5. Will it necessitate a variety of ways of obtaining and reporting the data?
6. Will it require teacher guidance and participation in seeking solutions or drawing conclusions?
7. Will it provide the children opportunity to utilize the solution in the situation from which the problem arose in the first place?
8. Will it assure the possibility for moving ahead once it is solved?²¹

B. Objectives of Problem-Solving

Klausmeier and his co-workers felt that by careful observation the teacher can appraise the growth of problem-solving techniques and a scientific attitude in the students

²¹Logan and Logan, op. cit., p. 196.

as they outline their procedures in written form, experiment, and report their findings. This appraisal is not postponed until the end of a unit, semester, or year. Instead, it begins as soon as the development of problem-solving techniques and a scientific attitude are identified as objectives. It receives special emphasis when a problem is identified; and it remains a vital part of an effective, progressive, teaching-learning situation.²²

There was a problem to be solved at the Kalihi-Uka Elementary School in Honolulu. Toki Ikeda, teacher of creative drama, was trying to help her children obtain verbal freedom. All of the children needed much work in oral language. Eloise Hayes reports the following results because of the outcome of the story of "The Monkeys and the Peddler," which was read in Miss Ikeda's "Early Bird Class" of kindergarten children. She had tried language games, songs, conversation, choral speaking, and many other approaches to encourage the children to talk. Hayes concluded by stating that after this story the children laughed and mimicked her in their characterizations of the monkeys. Because of the outstanding results achieved from creative dramatics in the advancement of oral language, a specialist was included in the school to

²²Klausmeier, op. cit., p. 382.

expand the program. This program was not intended to produce acting skill but rather to help children become more aware of life, see their physical surroundings with delight, develop empathy, and develop more faith and confidence in themselves. The increased language flow and growth in vocabulary are outcomes of a process in which the mind becomes free so that ideas run through it easily and flexibly. The lesson proper included a motivation period, a planning time, a play period, and an evaluation of the story, poem, or idea.²³ This procedure is similar in the solution of any problem. The motivation period would be the period when a solution is necessary. The planning would be the possible solutions, the playing would be the gathering of information and the experimenting with them, and the evaluation would be the results of the possible solutions upon the problem at hand.

Kalihi-Uka's principal, A. Ray Blue, said, "The big thing about creative drama is that it allows the children to make their minds work as they want them to work. Always before, they've been doing what the teacher wanted them to do."²⁴

²³Eloise Hayes, "Creative Drama at Kalihi-Uka," Today's Education, N.E.A. Journal, LVII (September, 1968), 30-32.

²⁴Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

CREATIVE DRAMATICS IN THE PROGRAM

The child needs time, warmth, sympathy, inspiration, and guidance before he can unfold, stretch out, and increase his stature through creative thought and expression.¹

A. Values to the Child Through Creative Dramatics

James G. Barton, Professor of Speech, has emphasized that all art has three purposes: (1) to clarify, (2) to intensify, and (3) to interpret.²

Eleanor Chase York has listed the following values which were based on thirty years of observation by outstanding creative dramatics leaders: (1) creativity, (2) sensitivity, (3) fluency, (4) flexibility, (5) originality, (6) emotional stability, (7) social co-operation, (8) moral attitudes, (9) physical poise, and (10) simple skills in communication.³

¹Isabel B. Burger, Creative Play Acting, p. 3.

²James G. Barton, Southwest Texas State College, in lecture notes, July, 1968. Permission to quote the notes was obtained.

³Geraldine Brain Siks and Hazel Brain Dunnington (eds.), Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics, pp. 124-130, citing York, Values to Children from Creative Dramatics.

Creativity. Too often in older children the power of creativity dwindles into timidity. Because of the educator's desire to educate children to live comfortably within the rigid patterns of a certain culture, children are kept from having freedom to create. Conformity rather than individuality is emphasized. Children are directed rather than stimulated, and they are given the pattern to copy many times. All of these practices hamper creativity. Siks believes that creative dramatics "develops confidence and creative expression."⁴

Sensitivity. Perhaps a child is asked to recall a bit of action from real life; or he depends upon his observations of nature so that he can create an imaginary setting in which to play; or he listens intently to music so that he can discover the rhythmic patterns and the story. When children study the motivations and feelings of the characters with whom they play, they acquire an understanding of people which contributes to their becoming sensitive, sympathetic individuals.⁵

Fluency. To move quickly from one idea to another and to see many possibilities in one situation are indications of

⁴Ibid., p. 126.

⁵Ibid.

the aspects of fluency. Fluency of ideas is an indication of creativity. A demonstration of fluency of ideas can be seen in the actions of a young child who quickly creates from the same cardboard carton a boat, a plane, a tower, and a house. The child finds himself searching for many solutions to the same problem and thereby increasing his ability to think with fluency.⁶

Flexibility. Improvised drama which comes from a group of children playing together demands that they adapt their thinking to the suggestions and direction of other individuals. To be flexible is to be able to seize upon a new idea and to use it to progress to another.

Originality. York has stated that educators from all fields have come to admit that the shaping of the future will demand minds which have the vision and imagination not only to seek the answers but to ask the questions which technology and science cannot ask.⁷ The original thinker is ahead of the mass of the people. With the influence of television and the general stress on conformity, the children of today are

⁶Viktor Lowenfeld, Creative and Mental Growth, p. 8.

⁷Siks and Dunnington, op. cit., p. 127, citing York.

facing the problem of the buffing of their originality. A creative person has his own ideas and has a feeling of freedom.

Emotional stability. Leaders in the field are somewhat cautious about asserting therapeutic aspects of the art, partly because creative dramatics is an art and not a tool. However, all leaders have seen individuals and groups moved toward more stable emotional and mental health through participation in creative drama.

Social co-operation. To be a harmonious playing group, that group must co-operate. This co-operation does not hamper the original ideas; but ideas are discussed, and then individual personalities adjust to the decision of the group. This process is similar to problem-solving when several solutions are sought, but when one is chosen.

Moral attitudes. According to York, the art of creative dramatics is ideally adapted to the development of healthy attitudes toward oneself and others as the child goes through the formative years.⁸ Siks refers to the building of attitudes as contributing toward a philosophy of living as follows:

⁸Ibid., pp. 129-130.

He cogitates and thinks upon things far greater and more glorious than his immediate sphere of living. He strengthens his social and aesthetic attitudes and appreciations. In direct but vivid ways creative dramatics introduces children to a philosophy by which to live.⁹

Physical poise. Children will gain physical poise by playing different roles. The child acquires physical coordination, grace, and poise through the rhythmic movement involved in every form of creative dramatics.

Simple skills in communication. Since dialogue is always improvised, the child learns to think quickly. He gains confidence in his own thinking and is ashamed of nothing which pours forth as he contributes to the planning of a creative play. The leader must be understanding of this value of creative drama, or he will crush the freedom of ideas, speech, and actions which develop through improvised drama.

Winifred Ward has stated the values which should come to children from participation in creative dramatics. They are as follows:

1. Experience in thinking creatively and independently.
2. Practice in strongly-motivated social co-operation.

⁹Siks and Dunnington (eds.), op. cit., p. 130, citing York, op. cit., p. 37.

3. Opportunity to grow in understanding people.
4. Controlled emotional release, which every child needs.
5. Experience in thinking on one's feet.
6. Opportunity for fun.
7. Gaining poise and initiative through expressing oneself.
8. Impressions of factual information brought alive.¹⁰

Isabel B. Burger believes that leaders working with children between the ages of twelve and sixteen should recognize the urgent need for a specific medium to develop controlled and balanced emotions. She continues by relating the fact that a child, during this period, is struggling to become an individual, to detach himself from the family group and find his place in the social group. To further complicate his task of readjustment, this child is beset with the rising tide of emotional energy which is forever seeking some channel of freedom.¹¹ When the child becomes another character in a dramatic situation, he is feeling deeply the emotions of someone else. This situation provides a healthy release from tensions for both boys and girls.

¹⁰Winifred Ward, Stories to Dramatize, pp. 1-2.

¹¹Burger, op. cit., p. 2.

Paul S. Anderson has reported that many children by the age of twelve have seen more of the great dramatic personalities and literature than past generations have known in a lifetime. The concept of unity, which once seemed such a difficult idea, can be easily understood because many of the favorite children's programs usually follow a theme as simple and obvious as that of old folk stories.¹²

Science, language arts, and social studies played a part in an elaborate dramatic project of the sea called "High, Wide, and Deep," developed by sixth-grade children in Hueytown, Alabama. Achievement tests revealed that during the year in which this project was developed the children made most unusual advancements in paragraph comprehension, word meaning, and spelling.¹³

Kenneth L. Husbands has said that a child can forget himself in dramatization and find an easy outlet for the development of creativity in many forms. Such experiences help to eliminate barriers to co-operation and to overcome such undesirable traits as negativism, withdrawal, or antisocial behavior.¹⁴

¹²Paul S. Anderson, Language Skills in Elementary Education, p. 65.

¹³Siks and Dunnington, op. cit., p. 146, citing York.

¹⁴Kenneth L. Husbands, Teaching Elementary School Subjects, pp. 413-414.

Mauree Applegate, a teacher of creative writing, believes that creative dramatics in the intermediate grades helps children to work out better answers to their real problems.¹⁵

In speaking of the child who uses creative activity as an emotional outlet, Viktor Lowenfeld concludes that the child will gain freedom and flexibility as a result of the release of unnecessary tensions. The child who has developed freedom and flexibility in his expression will be able to face new situations without difficulties. Since the idea is generally advocated that progress, success, and happiness in life depend greatly upon the ability to adjust to new situations, Lowenfeld emphasizes the importance of creative art education for personality growth and development.¹⁶ Lowenfeld gives the following chart as reference to the importance of creative dramatics which contrasts the values of self-expression with those of imitation as:

<u>Self-Expression</u>	<u>Contrasted With</u>
Expression according to child's own level	Expression according to strange level
Independent thinking	Dependent thinking
Emotional outlet	Frustration

¹⁵Mauree Applegate, Easy in English, p. 365.

¹⁶Lowenfeld, op. cit., p. 7.

Freedom and flexibility	Inhibitions and restrictions
Easy adjustment to new situations	Going along set patterns
Progress, success, happiness	Learning toward others, ¹⁷ dependency, stiffness

B. Participation of the Child in Creative Dramatics

Ward has expressed the belief that creative dramatics has its greatest value in speech when the children are trained, or acquire the ability, to think on their feet. If children have enough experience in creative drama, they will acquire a considerable degree of poise in speech.¹⁸ Children want to express themselves well and want to be heard clearly.

Wilbur H. Dutton and John A. Hockett have stated that without adult help the educational value of dramatics is limited, for children tend to repeat with little or no improvement the same play patterns. The art of creative dramatics reveals new possibilities of social interaction within peer groups and presents the challenge to children of searching for, acquiring, and using a vast amount of information and understanding.¹⁹

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 7-8.

¹⁸Winifred Ward, Playmaking with Children, p. 264.

¹⁹Wilbur H. Dutton and John A. Hockett, The Modern Elementary School, p. 306.

In summary, the older children become, the more they conform to set patterns and standards around them; naturally their creativeness becomes limited. Unless they are properly guided, children repeat play patterns. Children participate in creative dramatics through speech and dramatic play. Ways of expression other than through language should be sought. One good way would be to solve problems through role-playing. If ways are sought to encourage children to look at a situation, story, or problem from all angles, then the natural creativeness of children is released. From this training or guidance, the child can in later life relate the experience of the search, the solution, and the sequence of events that followed. Children who can meet new situations well are happier and more productive.

C. The Role of the Teacher in Creative Dramatics

In expressing the role of the person who guides in creative dramatics, Ward has said that the experience of dramatizing may be more than merely putting a story into dialogue form; intelligent guidance is indispensable. Grownups who understand children and know the requirements of good drama can give boys and girls rich, happy, and enjoyable experiences by helping them to see exciting things in the story and to be selective in the use of these things. Ward suggests that

the safest procedure is to follow the plan of a certain after-dinner speaker who, on being praised for his very clever response to the toastmaster, said, "My speech was not extemporaneous. I was sure that Nelson would introduce me in one of three ways, and I simply prepared speeches in reply to all three."²⁰

In the opinion of both Dutton and Hockett, the teacher's role should include the following:

1. He provides a classroom environment with sufficient space and any minimum essential properties for the first efforts.
2. He reveals his sympathetic interest and permissive attitude that encourages each child to be his non-self-conscious self.
3. He guides the evaluation so as to reveal needs for more information.
4. He arranges for construction of necessary materials.²¹

According to Applegate, many intermediate teachers "turn off the tap of creativity as expertly as if it were a faucet over the sink. Directing and guiding a child's creativity is a vastly different thing from substituting a teacher's ideas for a child's."²²

²⁰Ward, Playmaking with Children, p. 125.

²¹Dutton and Hockett, op. cit., p. 307.

²²Applegate, op. cit., p. 278.

Stories from everyday life are valuable. They can expand the horizon of the children, but great stories are necessary because the children should be introduced to characters who are both fascinating and ennobling.²³ The teacher should enjoy creative works, too. Ward depicts the role of the teacher as one who takes advantage of courses in creative dramatics, one who reads books and does experiments until the children can be guided successfully, and one who personally finds time for creative dramatics. There should be freedom with control, but Ward has cautioned that a "critical, demanding teacher gets no really creative work from her pupils."²⁴

The teacher as a guide will help the children to read between the lines and to see the possibilities in a story. The classroom of the teacher who has a dramatic way of teaching is never dull because children are given outlets for feelings as well as for thoughts.

Ward discusses the fact that children who experience new countries vicariously will retain far more factual knowledge than those who memorize facts. In describing the qualifications of the teacher, Ward emphasizes the following:

²³Ward, Playmaking with Children, pp. 4-6.

²⁴Ibid., p. 269.

1. The teacher of creative dramatics must have integrity of character which shines through everything that she does and builds respect.
2. The teacher is sensitive to others. This sensitivity enables the teacher to move imaginatively inside the lives of others and to experience what they are feeling.
3. Emotional maturity is needed in a teacher if boys and girls are to be helped with their real problems and needs. The teacher must be unprejudiced against race or religions.
4. Judgment and taste are indispensable companions for the teacher. Although home background counts greatly, a sense of the fitness of things must be learned by experience.
5. The teacher must have a sense of humor. Although children always react to a young and pretty teacher, they would exchange her any time for an older, less attractive person with a good sense of humor.
6. Vitality is essential when a teacher is working with lively youngsters. Although good health helps, it is less important than qualities of mind and spirit.²⁵

²⁵Ibid., pp. 283-285.

The teacher with individuality has a horizon far wider than her classroom. Books and travel can help the teacher to be a more interesting person. In adding to the above qualities, Ward suggests:

She has strong social consciousness, is a part of her neighborhood and the various activities in all of the community life, is concerned about the national scene and will take the trouble to write her congressman on crucial issues. She has a global point of view . . . and must somehow build leaders who are more foresighted . . . more understanding, more courageous in speaking and acting according to their convictions. . . .²⁶

²⁶Ibid., p. 286.

CHAPTER V

PROCEDURES IN THE TEACHING OF CREATIVE DRAMATICS

A. Basic Principles

The teacher is the key person in the guidance of the children in creative dramatics. If the children are not stimulated and developed so that they can release their native ability, then they tend to remain set in the pattern that they have just experienced. Many experiences in problem-solving through the use of creative drama situations will give the children control over the processes of their thinking, and these skills will be implicit in their behavior.

Winifred Ward classifies these as basic principles to follow:

1. The teacher is a guide rather than a director. . . .
2. Stories chosen should be of good literary quality and be suited to the age and interests of the children who are to use them. . . .
3. They should be introduced in such a way as to relate them to the past experiences of the children. . . .
4. A play is created character by character, scene by scene, before the entire story is played. . . .
5. Children are motivated to observe other people so that characterization . . . may come from inside.

6. A part of the group becomes an audience for playing of each scene so that the players can communicate. . . .
7. The teacher guides the children by skillful questions to think of more possibilities in the story than they at first see, and to understand meanings and values.¹

Burger has emphasized that recreating in pantomime simple activities with which children are familiar is the best method of beginning the dramatic project. She continues by giving the objectives toward which the program of this part should be directed. They are as follows:

1. Activating the imagination.
2. Releasing the body by encouraging natural responses to an imaginary stimulus.
3. Developing the powers of concentration.²

The following suggestions are intended merely to serve as models for the leader of creative dramatics. The person responsible must consider the age level, general intelligence, experience range, social and educational status, and the primary interests of the children participating. Examples for the eleven- to thirteen-year-old age group are these quoted from Burger:

¹Geraldine Brain Siks and Hazel Brain Dunnington (eds.), Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics, p. 149, citing W. Ward, "Creative Dramatics in Elementary and Junior High School."

²Isabel B. Burger, Creative Play Acting, p. 25.

Threading a needle
 Writing a letter, sealing, stamping and addressing it
 Arranging flowers in a vase
 Raking leaves on the lawn
 Spinning a top
 Tuning the radio to a favorite program
 Wrapping a gift for mother
 Peeling potatoes, apples, onions
 Crossing a stream on steppingstones³

The children's ideas may be far different from the teacher's, but their ideas should be used when at all possible so that the children will not lose faith in their own ability to create. To help teachers to direct the ideas of children, Ward has suggested the following plan: (1) set the mood for make-believe, (2) present the story, (3) plan for the dramatization, (4) choose the cast, (5) play the scene, and (6) make an evaluation.⁴

Setting the mood for make-believe. Creativity needs a free, relaxed, friendly feeling on the part of both children and teacher. There must be a feeling of happiness if the children are to give their best.

Presenting the story. The teacher should be alive and interested when she is telling or reading the story. She should

³Ibid.

⁴Winifred Ward, Stories to Dramatize, pp. 9-11.

avoid a rapid rate when she tells any story which requires children's careful thinking. As the children grow older, they can discuss the author's meaning in the story. The leader should be sure to ask the children to look for some particular thing.

Planning the dramatization. Ward has stated that the first questions to consider when the dramatization is being planned are these:

(1) At what point shall the dramatization begin?

(2) Where will the scene take place?⁵

Every character should be engaged in some sort of action. The dramatization is played all over the room rather than divided into scenes and played as if on a stage. The action of the children should be natural and "felt" by them.

Choosing the cast. Ward feels that care should be taken in the choice of the first cast for two reasons: (1) the scene should be done reasonably well so that interest in the story's possibilities will be aroused; yet (2) care must be taken so that not all of the talented children are placed in one cast because the result would be a poor play the next time.⁶

⁵Ibid.

⁶Winifred Ward, Playmaking with Children, p. 30.

First playing of the scene. The characters should be tried first in pantomime and then in dialogue. In this way they can concentrate their attention on an interpretation of the story and character through action. It has been found that the first playing is often disappointing.

Evaluation. From the time the scene is begun, the children are not to be interrupted nor corrected. The evaluation is to be done after the scene has been completed and after the children have returned to their seats. There should always be an evaluation period.

B. Aspects and Dramatizations of the Story

In both of Ward's books, Playmaking with Children and Stories to Dramatize, vital aspects of story dramatizations are given:

The story. Was it true to the story and the characters of the story? Was the part to be played made clear?

The characters. Did they seem to be the real characters of the story? Was the part to be played made clear?

The action. Was there enough action to make the play move?

The dialogue. Did it seem to belong to the characters? Was there enough action to make the story move?

The timing. Did the scene move along at a natural pace?

The teamwork. Did they listen to what others were saying?

Enunciation and projection. Could all hear and understand?

In considering the evaluation of a scene, the guide must remember never to embarrass individual children. When comments are made, the names of the characters should be used. Caution must be taken to avoid the use of a child as chairman in the evaluation period. This practice is valuable for the child but is less valuable for the group because of the lack of adult guidance.⁸

There should be a review of pertinent suggestions before the second acting or role-playing. If the story lacks new creativity, the teacher must enter the play. Basically these objectives must be kept in mind, Ward states:

What should the children be getting out of this experience? If they are doing some independent thinking, growing in their insight into people, playing together happily, and having a healthy emotional outlet, you should be able to throw your desire for perfection to the winds and be glad that they are getting the things which matter most.⁹

⁷See both of Ward's books as named.

⁸Ward, Playmaking with Children, p. 30.

⁹Ward, Stories to Dramatize, p. 15.

Kenneth L. Husbands has depicted dramatic play as a unique and realistic way of reconstructing situations and events. The dramatic participation may range from spontaneous play to the carefully rehearsed formal drama complete with costumes and scenery. Between these two are classroom opportunities and activities such as the skit, brief dialogues, charades, marionettes, pageantry, and impersonations.¹⁰

Improvisation is an excellent method that can be used in the development of creative abilities in children. For instance, the students could use a familiar situation and expand it. The more avenues that are traveled, the more creative abilities are released. In the study of Hawaii, the group could study the growing of pineapple. The ability to associate one's own actions and feelings with the actual real-life happenings of planting, cultivating, harvesting, and marketing are vital. If the students act out the knowledge they have searched for through motivation of the subject, then the facts will stay with them and will come alive for the entire group.

✓Two vehicles that can be used for dramatic work are puppetry and the sociodrama. The main purpose of sociodrama

¹⁰Kenneth L. Husbands, Teaching Elementary School Subjects, p. 413.

is to assist children in their need to become aware of the feelings and problems of others.¹¹

C. Literature for Creative Dramatics

In the classroom there are many stories that have possibilities for use in creative drama. The concerned leader will make use of good literature. The desirable qualities of stories are listed by Ward as follows:

1. The idea should be of some worth.
2. The writing should be carefully done.
3. The central situation should involve conflict of some sort.
4. The characters should seem real.
5. The situations should call for interesting dialogues.¹²

There are, of course, many good stories to use and perhaps some that could be used for all age levels. The following literature for the intermediate age levels has been listed by Ward:

¹¹Paul S. Anderson, Language Skills in Elementary Education, p. 67.

¹²Ward, Playmaking with Children, pp. 90-95.

Children of nine, ten, eleven. There is an interest in hero stories both real and fictitious, and these children like tales of pioneers, Indians, and cowboys. The children of this age like realistic stories better than imaginative literature. The magical characters of Mary Popping and Mr. Popper's Penguins are good, though only part of these can be used for creative drama. Two more recent books that join the real and the fanciful are The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by C. S. Lewis and The Magic Bed-Knob by Mary Norton. Stories that probably will never lose their enchantment are "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," "Aladdin," and "The Emperor's New Clothes." Popular stories of adventure and excitement are Robin Hood and Tom Sawyer.¹³

Children of twelve, thirteen, fourteen. The most striking change in story interests is that along with their liking for realism, mystery, and excitement comes a feeling for idealism and romance. The romance is the kind which comes from looking at the world through rose-colored glasses, not the romance of love-making. Children at this age group are moved by ceremonies and rituals. Ward mentions that among

¹³Ibid., pp. 110-111.

their favorites are Treasure Island and Ivanhoe; both are romantic. The children also enjoy an old ballad entitled "Get Up and Bar the Door." Favorite modern ballads are "The Enchanted Shirt" and "King Robert of Sicily."¹⁴

¹⁴Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

PROBLEM-SOLVING: LEARNING AND LIVING

Since life is a constant learning process, creative dramatics can better prepare the child for problem-solving. The following story about David illustrates the way that the use of creative dramatics can be used to aid children in problem-solving. Five-year-old David vigorously stirred the conglomeration in the large mixing bowl. He had explored his mother's spice rack, added water, and, in answer to his mother's question about what he was doing, had replied, "I'm doin' my experiences." In this story about David, the counselor working with his case explored many solutions. The main task was to help David to adjust and mature as he should. The basic conclusion was that "playmates and opportunities to experiment are the ingredients that equip children for coping."¹

According to the information received from the Texas Division of the Dow Chemical Company, the most typical difficulty people have in problem-solving is the failure to make full use of the information available. A case in point

¹Bettie O. Higgins, "Doin' Experiences," Home Life, October, 1968, pp. 38-39.

is the story of the truck that was stuck in an underpass. Many onlookers tried to be helpful and suggested ways for removing it, but all their suggestions involved reasonably major deformations of either the truck or the underpass. At this point, a little boy stepped forth and suggested letting air out of the tires. Many such stories exist in science and invention, and they serve to show the same point: a solution once stated can be seen as "obvious."²

How is it possible for a person to have the necessary information and not be able to use it? The answer seems to lie in the fact that the brain, like the computer, is divided into a storage unit and a processing unit. While the storage unit can hold a vast amount of information, the capacity of the processing unit is strictly limited. The average person is able to retain and repeat back immediately only about seven unrelated digits. This fact, along with other research, suggests that the processing unit can handle no more than about seven independent items of information at a time.³

A. Problem-Solving as a Learning Experience

The processing unit must be guided by a systematic search plan. Unless it possesses perfect memory of where it has already been or looked, it can easily overlook elements or

²Ray Hyman and Barry Anderson, "Guides for More Effective Problem-Solving," International Science and Technology, Issue 45 (September, 1965), p. 23.

³Ibid.

combinations for consideration. The processing unit must also sift the relevant from the irrelevant, as well as organize the elements into larger units so that it can deal with more items in its attempt to construct a workable solution pattern. In searching for the direction to look, the problem-solver is more likely to hit upon the correct approach if he tries several approaches. Failure in problem-solving frequently stems from the fact that the problem-solver gets stuck on one approach and is unable to abandon it.⁴

William G. Shepherd explains a new approach which has a special label. The brand-new point of view is as follows:

"O.K., Charlie. You've made your point clear."

"But I haven't, Sam. My point is that things really do look different from down here."

"O.K., I'll buy it. Just because you're the only guy in the crowd young enough to stand on your head, don't overdo it. It makes me nervous. I couldn't do a headstand if my life depended on it."

"Whew, I'm not as young as I used to be, either, but listen, Sam. Say you can't see how things look when you're upside down, so turn those things upside down, and you'll get the same results."

"That's easy enough to say. But how do you do it, and why?"

"Well, here's an example. This man ran a school for boys in England. One of the kids had sticky fingers. He was always swiping things. You know

⁴Ibid.

what this man did? He called the boy in. He told the boy he was going to be his partner, and they would split the loot. Only one thing. The boy had to steal something every day.

"It wasn't long before the youngster was begging to get out of the deal. He was sick to death of stealing. According to what I read, that kid never swiped another thing as long as he was at school.

"That's what I mean about headstanding, Sam. And that's how it can pay off. If you look at things, especially problems, just the opposite of the usual way, you can often discover a different understanding of your problem and a new, successful way of handling it."⁵

This technique, called "headstanding" by Charlie, is a basic operational device that is used by every individual industrial consultant worth his "salt," according to Shepherd.⁶ There is no reason why this tool cannot become a helpful instrument, a procedure, for anyone with problems to solve. It is a very valuable attitude for students to develop in school as well as for later life. The view from underneath a car might also be considered. Shepherd has expounded further upon his theory with his statement that everyone has looked at the engine of a car when the hood had been lifted. From this view, however, there are many essential parts that are not evident. An entirely different picture of the engine can be seen from underneath the car. The same approach can

⁵William G. Shepherd, "Taking a 'Stand' on Problems," Textile World, CXV (April, 1965), 124.

⁶Ibid., p. 123.

be used when problems arise. Children need to be taught this new approach also. Because something has always been done in a certain way or by a particular method, many people have the bad habit of believing that their way or method is the only one.⁷

"Headstanding," then, does not mean "upside down" only. It represents the whole principle of taking a novel approach, of trying out new ideas and new methods that have never been considered before. Familiar areas where someone else tried headstanding to find a different approach are in the areas of space and mechanics.⁸

In the area of space. Somebody with a brain much more like the average person's brain than like Einstein's began to wonder whether elements could be made smaller than they always had been made. Now tiny motors and tiny electronic devices give nuclear power a chance to put men, Echos, and Telstars into orbit.

In the area of mechanics. Many typewriter carriages wore out clattering back and forth before some headstanding man envisioned the "golfball" that does all the imprinting

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

and bouncing around while the "carriage" stays still. Every male over seventeen years of age has pondered the case of the company that sold a dozen or so swords a year, had one of its members think of applying the sword-making processes to razor blades, and not only began to sell its product by the millions but also revolutionized an industry.⁹

Some of the key questions to ask if one is to become an expert headstander are as follows:

1. Can this be done backwards? Upside down, in reverse, side-ways, lower, higher?
2. Can this be done at a different time? Can this be done earlier, later, before something else . . . ?
3. Can this be replaced by a substitute? Can something similar but varied slightly be used . . . ?
4. Can this be changed in its nature? Can different or new materials, larger . . . shorter or broken be used?¹⁰

These questions are just a beginning, but they can get a person going in a refreshing and productive direction. In the process, a thousand and one variations such as ideas on color, sound, space, philosophy, reasons, and purpose will be discovered.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

The creative person is a many-faceted creature who is difficult to serve through present systems. Such a person is original, independent, self-assertive, imaginative, and sensitive. His needs can be served only through practices that value, focus on, and flexibly modify his individual uniqueness. Teachers who help the creative person must listen as well as talk, must enjoy being challenged as well as making challenges, and must gain joy in life from the new structures of thought that form in their own minds.

Crutchfield agrees with this thought in this statement:

. . . The needs for individualized instruction, especially in connection with the training of creative skills, are germane to the program of research on instructing children in creative thinking and problem-solving. . . . We have been guided in the belief that virtually every child--regardless of his level of intelligence, school achievement, and socioeconomic background--needs and can substantially benefit from explicit training in creative thinking; that there is, in short, an enormous gap between his usual performance on creative thinking tasks and the performance he is really capable of.¹¹

B. Problem-Solving as a Complete Living Experience

Hyman and Anderson give several guidelines that can help in the problem-solving process. These guidelines are discussed briefly in the paragraphs below.

¹¹Ross L. Mooney and Taher A. Razik (eds.), Explorations in Creativity, p. 198.

One should run over the elements of the problem in rapid succession several times until a pattern emerges that contains all elements simultaneously.¹² Descartes dealt with this aspect of solving problems in "Rules for the Direction of the Mind" when he surmised:

If I have first found out by separate mental operations what the relation is between magnitudes A and B, then that between B and C, between C and D, and finally between D and E, that does not entail my seeing what the relation is between A and E, nor can the truths previously learned give a precise knowledge of it unless I recall them all. To remedy this, I would run them over from time to time, keeping the imagination moving continuously in such a way that while it is intuitively perceiving each fact it simultaneously passes on to the next; and this I would do until I had learned to pass from the first to the last so quickly that no stage in the process was left to the care of memory, but I seemed to have the whole in intuition before me at the same time. This method will relieve the memory, diminish the sluggishness of our thinking, and definitely enlarge our mental capacity.¹³

Suspended judgment should be used, or one should take some time to decide before a conclusion is reached. Through some delay he can avoid getting stuck on the first one or two interpretations that come to mind. A hasty interpretation could trap the mind into a wrong answer or direction. An experiment illustrates this point:

¹²Hyman and Anderson, op. cit., p. 23.

¹³Ibid., pp. 24-25.

When color slides of familiar objects, such as a traffic light, were projected upon a screen, people tried to identify the objects while they were still out of focus. Gradually, the focus was improved, through several stages, but the striking finding in this: If a person wrongly identifies an object while it is far out of focus, he frequently still cannot identify it right when it is brought into focus sharp enough for another person who has not seen the blurred vision to easily identify it.¹⁴

One should explore the environment and vary the temporal and spatial arrangement of the materials. This process serves to keep the mind "loose" and may help uncover familiar patterns that were originally masked by an unfamiliar arrangement. A rearrangement of the elements of a problem may hold the key to its solution. One psychologist, for example, found that his subjects had difficulty in their specification of the relation of George to Willie when he gave them this information: "Harry is shorter than George; Harry is taller than Willie." Adult subjects took longer to find their answers than children did when the problem was put in its more familiar form: "George is taller than Harry; Harry is taller than Willie."¹⁵

One should produce a second solution after the first. This procedure serves to shift the stress from solution-mindedness to problem-mindedness. According to one study,

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

the person who is looking for his first solution to a problem is dominated by strong pressures to achieve that solution. When he is encouraged to seek a second solution, it is usually a more creative one. The person who is no longer driven to find a solution can look at the problem from all sides.¹⁶

Another guideline is that one should take a break when he is really stuck. This advice is most frequently given to problem-solvers.

The last guideline is that one should talk about the problem with someone. In talking with someone, the person talking is perhaps forced to consider aspects of the problem that were never considered before. A discussion of the problem with someone insures the fact that gaps must be closed if there is to be full communication with the listener. The listener, too, usually provides a feedback that quickly shows up obscure or inconsistent points in the story. For this reason group discussion is especially helpful.¹⁷

Freeman Macomber's point of view is that considerable thought should be given to the manner in which discussion problems are stated. Questions which can be answered with "Yes" and "No" usually are not recommended, as they always

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 26.

have to be followed by the additional questions. Purely factual questions may be very desirable as problems for study and research if they represent facts for which the class really has a need, but they do not make good discussion questions.¹⁸

Robert M. W. Travers believes that the term "problem-solving" covers a wide range of phenomena. These phenomena share the common characteristic of a living organism being faced with a task but not having previously learned a response appropriate to the task.¹⁹

Louis D. Brandeis states: "Nine-tenths of the serious controversies which arise in life result from misunderstandings, result from one man not knowing the facts which to the other man seem important, or otherwise failing to appreciate his point of view."²⁰

¹⁸Freeman Glenn Macomber, Teaching in the Modern Secondary School, p. 155.

¹⁹Robert M. W. Travers, Essentials of Learning, p. 399.

²⁰Hyman and Anderson, op. cit., p. 26.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY

Educators today are demonstrating an increased interest in the development of adults who can think creatively and solve problems. This training must begin in the elementary school. The young child who learns the methods of problem-solving through his firsthand experience will transfer these abilities from previous experiences to later situations with which he comes in contact. The dilemma of professional educators is that they know too little about how to recognize and capitalize on native ability when they are teaching for generalization. Creative dramatics is used to develop those abilities which prepare the child for unexpected situations.

Creative dramatics is activity in which informal drama is created by the players themselves and is for the personal development of the players. Another definition is that creative drama is the expression of thought and feeling in the child's own terms, through action, the spoken word, or both. Every child has creative potential which must be brought to the foreground, and one of the major ways to release this great potential is by creative dramatics. Strong support of this ability of creative dramatics to release

creativity can be gained from everyday occurrences. One incident might be the child's use of a handful of blocks to represent a skyscraper. Another might be found in the story of the young girl who did not feel that she could measure up in sports but who was chosen by her classmates to demonstrate a creative scene. The choice changed her whole outlook on life because she finally felt accepted and capable.

There are eight criteria of creativity which significantly differentiate creative from less or noncreative persons:

(1) fluency, (2) sensitivity to problems, (3) flexibility, (4) originality, (5) redefinition and the ability to rearrange, (6) analysis or the ability to abstract, (7) synthesis and closure, and (8) coherence of putting things together through organization. Creative talents do not look for conformity with teacher-approved models, nor do they seek to possess in childhood the qualities that will lead to adult success. The creatively gifted individuals consider high marks, intelligence quotients, vitality, character, and goal-directedness less important than do the high intelligence group. Children with creative ability do not find a comfortable place in today's classroom, but they possess a gift rarer than intelligence.

Next to actual conditioning of democratic conduct itself is vicarious experience approximating real-life

situations. Money spent for the few helps only the few. Money spent to build fine school and classroom libraries, to purchase materials for investigating and experimenting and creating, to provide for experience outside the school, and to supply consultant help brings returns for all of the children including those who are commonly designed as gifted. A classroom geared to release the creativeness of its most able children has been found to lift the level of living and learning for all of the children in the room.

The basic objective of the use of creative dramatics in the classroom is the guidance of children toward richer, fuller lives that will be in control of situations and problems and that will have freedom and fulfillment. Also included are the following objectives: (1) to provide for a controlled emotional outlet, (2) to provide each child with an avenue of self-expression in one of the arts, (3) to encourage and guide the child's creative imagination, (4) to give young people opportunities to grow in social understanding and co-operation, and (5) to give children experience in thinking on their feet and expressing ideas fearlessly. These objectives cannot be reached without the guidance of the teacher. They are best obtained by the creative teacher, but an interested and alert teacher can draw from the creativeness of the children.

Since the foundation for understanding creative dramatics, the importance of creative dramatics in education, the nature of creativity, and the objectives of the teacher have been discussed, the focus is now upon the understanding of problem-solving. The relationship of creative drama and problem-solving could begin with the awareness that a problem exists, that it is recognized as such, and that evaluation must take place. The "self-image" represents a breakthrough in psychology and the field of creative personality. There is some logical and intimate psychological connection between creative production, problem-solving, and learning. It is believed that students can learn content by the use of different thinking and learning processes and that the entire curriculum could deliberately be developed so that the students could experience each of these important thinking and learning processes while they are simultaneously growing in subject matter.

The generally accepted steps to problem-solving are as follows:

1. Recognizing and defining the problem
2. Analyzing the problem into its basic elements and forming tentative hypotheses
3. Gathering pertinent data

4. Organizing, verifying, and interpreting data
5. Forming conclusions
6. Applying conclusions

The class should, with the teacher's aid, write the problem in a positive way, in terms which the children as a group understand and which indicate the tension that the problem causes them to feel. The next step would be the compilation of a list of the various suggested solutions of all of the children. If they are possible suggestions, they are left on the board; if they are suggestions that the class is certain are untrue or impossible, they are crossed off. It would also be a good idea to "role-play" or dramatize some of the most accepted solutions. This procedure is a definite link between creative dramatics and its aid to the children so that they can see more clearly how the problem could be solved. The children can see possible solutions and then decide together the possible desired results.

The objectives of problem-solving are these: (1) increased understanding of the involvements and of the implications of specific situations, (2) increased likelihood of the use of logic to meet situations, (3) a reservoir of approaches to various problems, (4) an understanding of the content, and (5) higher correlation between democratic principles and everyday behavior. The teacher can appraise the growth of

problem-solving techniques and scientific attitude in the students as they outline their procedures in written form, experiment, use creative dramatics, and report their findings. This appraisal is not postponed; it begins as soon as a problem is identified, and it remains an essential component of an effective, progressive, teaching-learning situation.

The use of creative dramatics as a solution for the oral language problem at the Kalihi-Uka Elementary School in Honolulu is an excellent example of the possibilities of the relationship of creative drama and problem-solving. It had seemed that the oral language problem could not be solved. However, one of the teachers read the story "The Monkeys and the Peddler," and the children became enthralled with the story. A dramatization of the story contributed greatly to the solution of the problem of oral language.

The writer feels that the use of the terms creative dramatics, role-playing, and rehearsal planning are interchangeable. The table on page 23 of this paper is given as a good example of the interrelation of the three terms.

The term "headstanding" has been interestingly used to suggest a novel approach to a problem. This approach states that one should look at the problem from "under the car and not up from under the hood." Children need to be taught that just because a thing has always been done a certain way

does not mean that there is not another way--even a better way. Some of the key questions to ask if students are to become expert headstanders are these:

1. Can this be done backwards?
2. Can this be done at a different time?
3. Can this be replaced by a substitute?
4. Can this be changed in its nature?

Educators who seek to prepare children in a better way for a world that is rapidly changing in factual knowledge must look to the procedures in the teaching of creative dramatics. Precreation in pantomime of simple activities with which children are familiar is the best method of beginning the dramatic project. This method helps to develop within the child his native possibilities; and it also helps him to express himself well with others, to be more understanding of others, and to co-operate more.

Dramatic play is a unique and realistic way of reconstructing situations and events. Some suggested literature for children of nine, ten, and eleven years of age concerns heroes, pioneers, Indians, and cowboys. The children of this age like realistic stories better than imaginative literature. The most striking change in story interests of children of twelve, thirteen, and fourteen is a feeling of idealism and a liking for romance.

The question of the relationship of creative dramatics to the preparation of the child for problem-solving situations becomes more important when there seems to be a definite link. It could be stated that, since creative activity consists of the imposition of organization upon the environment, it is necessary that man should perceive the objects which he transforms and organizes, and that they should become represented as precepts and concepts in his own inner world before he can do something with them constructively and creatively.

The best way to expand the use of creative dramatics in relation to problem-solving is to improve communication. A well-planned and demonstrated series of programs on television would help teachers to realize the values of creative dramatics. This program should be under the direction of a college or university so that teachers could receive credit for their participation. In-service workshops should be used to gain the interest of the entire faculty. Teachers should be encouraged to change positions regularly so that they will seek new ideas and will need to reorganize.

Another step to greater success in communications is the teacher's return to the college or university for refresher courses. Since this step is advantageous, the college council must place enthusiastic, well-trained professors

in key positions. Young college students should be given more opportunity to express their ideas, to practice their creative abilities, and to solve problems through role-playing or "created" situations.

Patience must be used in the search for the uses of creative dramatics and in the development of problem-solving abilities in children of the intermediate grades. The "tide" of demand for and release of creativity in children is rising; however, the public is slow to accept new steps unless they are well-advertised as worth-while advances and aids to future citizens.

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