

ABSTRACT

The dramatic process is a methodology for learning that utilizes the resources of drama. Participants become engaged in a physical and mental involvement in which the learning experience is transformed from a passive, static process into an active dynamic one. The process is, essentially, an activity that involves "acting out" using the "whole self".

This process is a fundamental aspect of human behaviour and is first exhibited in an individual's development as children's play. Indeed, such play is used by the child, not necessarily for enjoyment, but as a means of coping with a world he has yet to understand. It forms a fundamental part of growing up and provides the basis for a child's learning of new concepts and ideas with which he is confronted.

This thesis contends that this process of human development is not restricted to childhood but is an important tool for continuing education; consequently, it explores the use of the dramatic process in education and more specifically, its

role in the study of literature.

An author of prose, poetry or plays attempts to appeal to the imagination of the reader by using the power of language to convey a form of reality. This reality requires the reader to involve himself in a subjective interplay with the author's writing. The key to understanding literature lies not only in the outer reality presented in a text, but in coming to terms with the process by which the author's imagination is transferred to paper and, subsequently, back to the reader. The dramatic process is a fundamental transfer procedure and is therefore a powerful tool for the study of literature.

This thesis, first, explores the dramatic process from a theoretical point of view, then, provides examples of structured exercises that incorporate the dramatic process in its role in the study of literature. A play by the West Indian author, Derek Walcott, was chosen as a subject for study, primarily because it provided the resources and scope that would enable a West Indian student to identify with its form and content. The particular play, Ti-Jean and His Brothers, is a play of deceptively simple style which belies its complex and difficult themes.

The use of the dramatic process is shown to unlock the minds of the students to the underlying themes of the play and, therefore, provide a wider perspective of the author's vision.

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