

THEATRE EDUCATION

<p>UNIT TITLE</p>	<p>“Theatre as a pedagogical tool”</p>
<p>GENERAL GOAL</p>	<p>To understand the pedagogical value of theatre as a means of promoting the educational process.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To link theatre and theatrical practices to the educational framework concerning the social and cultural context. • to highlight social reflection as a pedagogical method through theatre • to give meaning to pedagogical practices through experiential activities
<p>ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION - METHODOLOGY</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED – FORUM THEATRE</u></p> <p>Theatre of the Oppressed is a type of theatre methodology developed by Augusto Boal (1931 – 2009) in the 1960s, inspired by the critical pedagogy and pedagogy of the oppressed concepts of Paulo Freire (1921 – 1997). Both were based in Brazil then, and the social-political context of those days (post-colonialist era and authoritarian military junta regime) significantly influenced the development of these concepts, approaches, and methodology.</p> <p>Forum Theatre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is an interactive type of theatre – the public will be engaged actively and can participate in the process and become “spect”; • Tackles real-life oppression in its various forms (the discussion here could be lengthy as very often oppression can be interpreted in endless ways and can be applied to almost all areas of life); • Aims to bring a change concerning the specific oppression approach – primarily by empowering the oppressed and those around them. <p>Steps in Forum Theatre development</p>

For a deeper understanding, we concentrated the process of developing a Forum Theatre project in 6 process phases, explained briefly in the following lines. Each phase depends on the previous one, and none should be removed from the process.

First phase – The basis

This phase is focused on finding answers to the following questions – the order can be different based on the type of project:

- Who is the team? (it can be part of the oppressed target group or a team of volunteers who believe in change using this method)
- What are the budget and the structure of the project? (if there is an existing project)- it will influence time allocation;
- What is the social problem approached and the aim of the Forum Theatre project? (aim is about the social problem - to bring a change concerning the problem)- Sometimes, the organization proposes the topic (based on the program and projects they are dealing with), but it can also be decided with the team.

Second phase – group/team development

This phase is focused on the team of volunteers to work on their group dynamics, getting to know each other, teambuilding, etc. It's a critical phase to set the team's foundation to create a Forum Theatre play together.

- Getting to know each other
- Teambuilding exercises
- Trust exercises
- Communication exercises
- Energizers/Ice breakers/ etc. Introducing the Forum Theatre method (information, videos, some exercises)

Third phase – Forum Theatre preparation

- If the topic is already given (from a third party), it is vital to research the oppression problem (understanding more deeply, research, direct contact with people affected or working with the theme, interviews, talking to specialists, etc.)
- Preparatory games, exercises, and activities on Attention, coordination, focus, space, body, speeds, movements, emotions (expressing emotions), rhythm, voice, imagination, creativity, decision-making, etc.
- Specific forum theatre (and other theatre of the oppressed) exercises: power exercises, exploring and understanding oppression, imitations, improvisations, image exercises, and image theatre.

Fourth phase – Development of Forum Theatre play

(*significant note: decisions are taken by consensus)

- Sharing/working with concrete stories reflecting the concerned social problem;
- Choosing the story that is the most relevant to the problem and that more people (from the target group/public could identify themselves with);
- Structuring the performance (3-4 scenes connected between them that have a dramatic ending (the oppressed character makes a wrong decision), 10-15 minutes maximum);
- Role distribution (based on personal preferences, not allocated – they could change in the process);
- Female roles are distributed to women, male roles are distributed to men, no travesty (only if the play is about it);
- Exercises for developing the characters;
- Exercises for developing the script;

Fifth phase – Implementation of Forum Theatre performance

- Introduction: from the Joker (facilitates the performance but stays neutral) (energizers with the public- to warm them up).
- The play is performed for the first time.
- Discussion with the public (about the problem, characters, connection with reality, discussion about the idea of change).
- Explaining the change process and the rules (clapping for making
- interventions, change of any characters except the oppressor, only one person at a time, no violence, no magic solutions).
- Interventions from the public and management of the interventions until the oppression is reduced and the oppressed character no longer makes the bad decision.
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	<p>(about the change produced and its realism) and a decision made with the public if the difference is kept or not!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of discussions and solutions proposed. • Transfer – the public is asked what they can transfer to their lives. • Conclusion. • Closure. <p><i>Sixth phase – Evaluation and Follow-up</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team evaluation, evaluation of the public (short and long term); • Decision with the team on how to proceed next – another FT play or another type of intervention. <p><u>To organize a Forum theatre performance carefully read the suggested guidelines in the literature/sources section.</u></p>
<p>LITERATURE/SOURCES</p>	<p>“ACT FOR NOW” Methods for Social Change - Image and Forum Theatre- (GUIDELINES) https://en.artfusion.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Methods-for-Social-Change-Image-and-Forum-Theatre-2014.pdf</p> <p>Boal, A. (1979). <i>Theatre of the Oppressed</i>. https://revolutionary-socialism.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Augusto-Boal-Theatre-of-the-Oppressed-20081.pdf</p> <p>Boal, A. (1992). Games for actors and non-actors. https://www.deepfun.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Games-for-actors-and-non-actors...Augusto-Boal.pdf</p>