

CHAPTER 2

# DRAMA

CHAPTER 2

# DRAMA

# INTRODUCTION

We recommend that teachers devote one class to chapter one, human rights exercises before they embark on this chapter. Each separate class or exercise has clearly outlined aims, objectives, length and NCCA key skills. We have also highlighted the material needed for each class or exercise. All handouts referenced in the classes can be found in the handout section at the end of this chapter.

## DRAMA AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights education (HRE) activities encourage participants to think critically about the world around them to challenge stereotypes and to explore different perspectives. They should be inspired to search out new solutions and to confront injustice.

Drama activities, such as role-plays, hotseating, Forum Theatre and Image Theatre can be used creatively in the classroom or community to explore human rights and development issues as they:

- Encourage participants to explore different perspectives and points of view. By taking on the role of a character, for example, a person being oppressed or excluded, the participant is encouraged to explore that person's point of view, background and situation. In this way, drama activities such as role-plays, challenge stereotypes, encourage empathy, and enable participants to realise the consequences of their own actions and those of others;
- Encourage critical thinking. Drama activities such as Forum Theatre ask participants to actively challenge the situations they see being played out before them, rather than simply being passive spectators to the action;
- Empower participants by enabling them to try out different solutions to a problem. Techniques such as Forum Theatre allow participants to change the script themselves in order to address the injustices presented within it, thereby developing in them the skills and confidence to challenge injustice in their own lives;
- Provide a forum for participants to move beyond their habitual ways of thinking and interacting, and thus open up new ways of finding solutions;
- Encourage cooperation between participants.

## OVERALL AIM OF THE SECTION

Students will critically engage with drama that looks at human rights issues, increase their knowledge of human rights issues and improve communications skills by creating their own dramatic prose.

### Introduction by Conor McPherson to the Voice Our Concern writing process

Any attempts I have made in the past to write something for a project, as opposed to freely making up whatever I wanted, have always been difficult and painful for me. The authentic voice of a human being blows anything contrived off the stage. When I write a play I have to try to relate everything the characters are doing or saying to something in my own life before I can even attempt to make it happen. So when Amnesty asked me to become involved in this project during what was already shaping up to be a really busy year for me, the first thing I knew was that I couldn't write anything. But then I came up with this idea of somehow trying to externalise the feelings people may have in a school, not just the students but the teachers too, and then somehow turning that into a performance.

Early in my career as a playwright I had a lot of luck and success working with actors performing monologues. And it seemed to me that this was a way I could quickly get to the heart of matters within a school. I was assigned to Newpark School in Dublin as my place to make a show and I went down there and met the Transition Year students and their drama teacher, Cathy Devis. I continued to visit them over the following weeks and I brought a tape recorder with me. I interviewed lots of the students and teachers individually (including the headmaster!) and then by listening to the tapes I picked the performers for the show: four students and four teachers. I interviewed them all again and from these tapes edited each of their interviews into a short piece that someone could perform in the first person. I then brought these pieces back to the school and edited them down with the help of the performers. The little twist to all of this was that the students were to perform the teachers' pieces and the teachers were to perform the students' pieces. Then we would rehearse the whole thing and put the show on in front of the school. As we began rehearsals I was never sure it would work. Instinctively I felt that something would happen, but these people had never done anything like this before and, in a way, neither had I. But the astonishing thing that began to happen was the natural way the performers began to find the right voice through which they could articulate the feelings of others – their own.

By simply saying another person's words, even another person from a different generation – another world - a very simple and moving picture of human beings in a certain place at a certain time emerged. And it emerged in a way that just reading the following accounts doesn't do justice. To hear an adult calmly describe the frantic world of a teenager on the cusp of adulthood says something so touching about what we leave behind and what is there before us waiting to be discovered as we move through the world. And to hear a teenager recount the experience of an adult further along their journey through this strange and confusing life evoked a moving mixture of hope and dread for the teenager and a sadness that our time of innocence inevitably ends. It was also very, very funny. To see the headmaster describing the panicked attempts of a teenager to escape from a hospital where she is being treated for the effects of too much smoking was just bizarre. And then to see that student talking to us about the changes she has seen in the school over the years, through the eyes of the headmaster, was pure gold. She found, in his voice, a man so different to the man himself; it was hilarious, fascinating and compelling. I concede that perhaps my observations are those of a performance anorak. All I ever search for in shows is the line between the 'real' and the 'performance' and then I dive straight into that space. Sometimes the results are weird or nonsensical, or just bad. But sometimes there are moments of great ringing truth that you just can't ignore. You suddenly sit up and react. And those were the moments we were searching for with this show, moments which revealed the possibilities – and limits – of empathy.

I am convinced that any group who try doing a show like this will find it immensely rewarding. You can also include as many aspects of performance as you like, e.g. set design, lighting, music (we used a live band to punctuate the show), thereby involving a lot more people than just the performers. The project took up months of our time and most of our thoughts, and there were times when we wondered would it ever end, but it was a huge experience for all of us. I learned so much about myself and about these people who I never would have met otherwise. It was unconditionally good. I cherish what we did and I'm grateful I got the chance.

**Conor McPherson**



Romani children at school, Ostrava, Czech Republic, 10 february 2009. © Amnesty International.

# CLASS 1

## HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH DRAMA

### AIM

Students will explore their personal responses to human rights through drama.

### OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Engaged with human rights values and ideas;
- Developed qualities of imagination and creative expression;
- Improved their ability to work as a team.



### NCCA KEY SKILLS

Information processing, communication, critical and creative thinking, working with others and being personally effective.

### MATERIAL NEEDED

All materials are from the handout section associated with this chapter.

UDHR Statement (Chapter 1, 1.1, pg 34)

*Chocolate Colin Farrells* by Roddy Doyle and St. Vincent's Secondary School, Dundalk. (handout section 2.3, pg 55).

### LENGTH

Full Class

## STEPS:

1. Have the class do a drama warm-up, from the handout section (handout section 2.6, page 66), 5 -10 minutes;
2. Divide the class into three groups;
3. Ask each group to look at the UDHR (handout section, Chapter 1, 1.1, pg 34);
4. After consulting the UDHR ask the students in each group to pick a right in the UDHR that they would like to portray;
5. Students should consider:
  - What feelings do they want their scene to portray?
  - What images come to mind when they think of this right?
6. After a 10-minute discussion the students should be ready to show their image to the rest of the class;
7. As one group at a time acts out their scene ask the other groups to walk around the image and then ask them to guess what human right is being portrayed;
8. Facilitate a discussion around the image/scene for about 5 minutes and then ask the next group to portray their image.

## READINGS

Give the students a copy of St. Vincent's Secondary School Dundalk and Roddy Doyle's *Chocolate Colin Farrells* (handout section 2.3, pg 55) and ask them to read it in preparation for the next class.

# CLASS 2

## VOICE OUR CONCERN PLAY

### AIM

Students will critically engage with the *Voice Our Concern* play that focus on human rights issues.

### OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Extended their ability to analyse, evaluate and discuss drama;
- Engaged with human rights values and issues.



### NCCA KEY SKILLS

Information processing, communication, critical and creative thinking, working with others and being personally effective.

### MATERIAL NEEDED

All materials are from the handout section associated with this chapter.

To prepare for the students after school activity they will need to access a computer and the internet, students should either access the computer at home, in a local library or at the school. Chairs will also be required for this class.

UDHR Statement (Chapter 1, 1.1, pg 34).

Drama warm-up exercise (handout section 2.6, pg 66).

Martin McDonagh's quote (handout section 2.2, pg 54).

*Chocolate Colin Farrells* by Roddy Doyle and St. Vincent's Secondary School, Dundalk. (handout section 2.3, pg 55).

### LENGTH

Full Class

## *Chocolate Colin Farrells* by Roddy Doyle and St. Vincent's Secondary School, Dundalk.

### STEPS:

1. Have your class do a drama warm-up exercise, see warm-ups below (handout 2.6, page 66);
2. Ensure that the class has read the play so they can answer the questions;
3. Following warm-up exercises put the chairs in a circle;
4. Ask volunteers to read the parts of the Transition Year students and Mizz.

## Discussion Point 1

**Louise:** Sorry.

**Aisling:** What about?

**Erica:** Do what? Nice one, Mary.

Mary is pleased. It's a warm moment for her.

**Mary:** You are welcome.

**Louise:** No, she's not welcome. (to Mary) And you aren't either.

**Mary** (as if – "Again?"): Why not?

**Louise** (mimicking her): Why not?

### Questions:

- What does Louise mean?
- Why does she say this?

## Discussion Point 2

**Mary:** But not everything is slagging. It cannot all be explained by "It's only slagging."

**Aisling:** She's right.

Louise shrugs. She decides to say nothing, to let it flow.

**Aisling:** Being called a nigger isn't slagging.

**Louise:** Hang on.

**Mary:** Having your hair pulled isn't slagging. Being told you are not welcome. Is not slagging.

Louise is suddenly crying, trying not to.

**Louise:** I didn't – I didn't do any of those things. How can you say that I –

### Questions:

- What is Mary trying to say in this excerpt? Do you agree with her?
- What are the human rights issues in this play?
- Do you think if the girls applied the human rights principles of dignity, respect and equality that they would talk to each other this way?
- Look again at the UDHR. Which articles are relevant to the experiences Mary describes?



Colm O'Gorman and Roddy Doyle, Dublin, Ireland, 2009. © Amnesty International.

# After Class Activity

The aim of this activity is to develop the students' research capabilities, as research is a critical part of the creative process when writing plays.

- Ask the students if they have a story that they are personally familiar with and want to tell.
- If the students feel they do not have a story that they want to tell advise them to look at a story that Amnesty International has told through some of their campaigns. For example they could look at our Individual Urgent Action campaigns. Go to Amnesty International Ireland [www.amnesty.ie](http://www.amnesty.ie) or [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org) to research these stories.
- Pick a story that you would like to tell. Begin to think about the plot of the play, the characters that will feature in the play and the theme of the play. Is your story about someone on death row, or someone in Guantánamo Detention Centre?
- Research will also help you create believable characters: so when you are doing your research imagine how your characters would think, what they were like as children, what hopes or dreams they had or what is their life story?
- Read out Martin McDonagh's quote below to inspire the students (handout section 2.2, page 54).

## CLASS 3

# WRITE YOUR OWN HUMAN RIGHTS INSPIRED PLAY

### AIM

Students will critically engage with the *Voice Our Concern* play that focus on human rights issues.

### OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Written a scene of a play, or developed a character in a potential play, or outlined the plot for their play about human rights;
- Improved their critical thinking skills;
- Conducted research and got a better understanding of the human impact that human rights abuses have upon a person or community;
- Communicated this research effectively by writing a character, scene or plot of a play based on research;
- Improved key writing skills.



### NCCA KEY SKILLS

Information processing, communication, critical and creative thinking and being personally effective.

### MATERIAL NEEDED

All materials are from the handout section associated with this chapter.

To prepare for the students after school activity they will need to access a computer and the internet. Students should either access the computer at home, in a local library or at the school. Chairs will also be required for this class.

UDHR Statement (Chapter 1, 1.1, pg 34).

Drama warm-up exercise (handout section 2.6, pg 66).

Hugo Hamilton's quote (handout section 2.1, pg 54).

Guidelines on writing (handout section 2.4, pg 62).

Character Card (handout section 2.5, pg 64).

### LENGTH

Full Class



## STEPS:

1. Begin class with one of the warm-ups, (handout 2.6, page 66);
2. Students can form groups or can do this as an individual project;
3. Read out the piece from Hugo Hamilton (handout section 2.1, pg 54) on beginning a piece of creative writing;
4. Hand out the artist's guidelines on writing a play, (handout 2.4, page 62);
5. Encourage the students to use the research that they have conducted to help them in developing their play;
6. Hand out the Character Card to help the students to develop their characters. Students should then be encouraged to flesh out their characters;
7. Ask the students to do an outline of their plot and to develop their storyline;
8. Finally ask each student to develop one scene from his or her play.



Children walk near the fence/wall outside the Palestinian town of Abu Dis, located just east of Jerusalem, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, 2007.  
© Amnesty International.



# RESERVED

# RESERVED

# RESERVED

# RESERVED

THESE SEATS ARE RESERVED IN HONOUR AND MEMORY OF THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:

- 1,200 PEOPLE ARE NOT HERE BECAUSE THEY ARE IN LONG-TERM BEDS IN PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS.
- 800 PEOPLE DIED BY SUICIDE IN IRELAND IN 2007.
- 75,000 PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS CAN'T BE HERE BECAUSE THEY EXPERIENCE LIMITATIONS IN PHYSICAL OR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.
- 65% OF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS ARE NOT HERE BECAUSE THEY DON'T WANT OTHERS TO KNOW THAT THEY HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM.
- DESPITE THE ODDS AGAINST THEM, 12,000 PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITY ARE NOT HERE BECAUSE THEY ARE AT WORK.

MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE  
**AMNESTY**  
INTERNATIONAL





HANDOUTS  
**DRAMA**

# HANDOUT 2.1

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

**Class 1: Human Rights through Drama** / pg 47

**Class 3: Write your own Human Rights Inspired Play** / pg.50

“Amnesty’s *Voice Our Concern* asked me how I begin a story. That’s a hard one. Put down something you remember. Writers are collectors, hoarding things in the back of the head. Put down one of those observations you have been storing up, and see where it leads to...”

**Playwright Hugo Hamilton:** How to get started

# HANDOUT 2.2

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

**Class 1: Human Rights through Drama** / pg 47

**Class 2: *Voice Our Concern Play*** / pg 48

**Class 3: Write your own Human Rights Inspired Play** / pg 50

“Art, like human rights, should be for everyone. Everyone has a voice and should use it. No one sees the world in exactly the same way. You don’t see the world through the same eyes as I do. Nobody will see how you think and feel about the world unless you express it some way. I’d like to hear your stories as much as you might like to hear mine.”

**Playwright and Film Director Martin McDonagh**

# HANDOUT 2.3

## *CHOCOLATE COLIN FARRELLS*

(BY RODDY DOYLE)

WITH ST. VINCENT'S SECONDARY SCHOOL, DUNDALK.

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

**Class 1: Human Rights through Drama** / pg 47

**Class 2: *Voice Our Concern Play*** / pg.48

**Class 3: Write your own Human Rights Inspired Play** / pg.50

### Introduction by Roddy Doyle

*Chocolate Colin Farrells* was written after a visit to St Vincent's School in Dundalk on the 10th of December, 2003 - World Human Rights Day. I spent the morning with the Transition Year class. They knew why we were meeting, to help me write a short play. I wanted the story, the themes, a bit of the local language and geography. I started by asking them about their lives as teenagers, their rights. I asked them about bullying. I asked about race and racism. One observation in particular made me decide that the play should be about racism: 'People need to feel they're better.' There was enough in that one sentence to keep me working for years. I asked the students for some phrases that they felt might be unique to the place and their age group. They brought me on the vernacular tour of Dundalk. 'What's the crack, hey?' 'It's class.' 'It's snakey.' 'He's dead-on.' I took these down. 'Who are you shifting?' I could begin to hear the characters talk.

The play is about a group of young women in Transition Year, divided into mini-companies and getting ready for their Trade Fair. The plot was easy to find. Because that's what was happening on the day I visited St Vincent's. I think it was a Wednesday, and the students were preparing for the Trade Fair, on Saturday. They were excited, and nervous; all set, and starting to panic. It was easy to imagine time running out, things going wrong. The setting would be a classroom, a good idea for a play that was to be performed in classrooms. The characters would be in uniform. It made sense, and the students seemed to think that it was a good idea. They told me about the products they were making for the Fair - mirrors, jewellery, smoothies. One group was making chocolate Santas. By the time I got home the Santas had become chocolate Colin Farrells. That's what driving on Irish roads does to you.

#### CHARACTERS:

Transition Year students:

LOUISE

JENNIFER

LIZ

AISLING

ERICA

HELEN

MARY

MS. HALPIN (Mizz)

A classroom. Two desks, not in their usual aligned positions, but apart and at different angles. There are four chairs, stacked, backstage, but none at the tables. There is a blackboard hanging backstage and, in coloured chalks, the words: "ST.HILDA'S TRANSITION YEAR TRADE FAIR". Added, in quickly written white chalk, after 'FAIR' is the word, 'ENOUGH'.

Lights up, and there are seven young women onstage; four stand at one table; three at the other. They are all Transition Year students. At Table 1: LOUISE, JENNIFER, LIZ and AISLING. Aisling is black, and Irish-born; her accent is local. At Table 2: ERICA, HELEN and MARY. Mary is black, and African; she has lived in Ireland for two years; her language is local but her accent is that of her parents.

The group at each table is a MINI-COMPANY. The girls are making the products that they will display and, they hope, sell at the Trade Fair. At Table 1, they are making Chocolate Santas. At Table 2, they are making Money Socks. A teacher, MS HALPIN, known to the students as MIZZ, charges on and off-stage. (There are other students, in other rooms, offstage.) This is MIZZ's big moment and, so far, no group has managed to complete a product.

The students at Table 1 have two mixing bowls, full of dark gunge, and wooden spoons, and plastic cast. The students at Table 2 have a variety of old socks, some jar lids, glue, and coins.

Erica holds a sock in the air. A slitted lid has been glued to the leg hole.

**ERICA:** (triumphantly): Ta-dah!

Mary drops a coin through the slit. The sock drops off the lid, to the table.

**LIZ:** Nice one.

**ERICA:** Damn.

She crosses to Table 1.

**ERICA:** Give us a look.

Liz takes a spoon from the bowl. The gunge slides off.

**ERICA:** Hah.

**LIZ:** Hah yourself.

Erica returns to her table Mary and Helen glue the lid back onto the sock. At Table 1, gunge is poured into a cast. But it won't pour smoothly – it drops.

**ERICA:** It'll never work. Chocolate Santas.

Mary drops a coin into the sock. It stays stuck to the lid. They silently celebrate. Another coin – it stays stuck – they begin to celebrate - the sock falls off.

**LOUISE:** Better than ol'money socks, anyway.

Enter Mizz. She walks/storms across, backstage. She stops, sees the sock, says nothing, looks distraught, sees ENOUGH on the blackboard. She wipes it off, and re-does some of the coloured chalk. The conversation/slugging continues.

**JENNIFER:** And they're not Santas.

**HELEN:** They're not anything. Only muck. What'll they be then?

**JENNIFER:** Well, if you must know –

The girls at Table 1 look at each other, and announce:

**TABLE 1:** Chocolate Colin Farrells.

Mizz turns, suddenly interested. She looks in the bowl at the goo - and is disappointed, annoyed.

**MIZZ:** That's him there, is it?

**AISLING:** Yes Miss.

**MIZZ:** And he'll be on his feet by the day after tomorrow, will he?

**LOUISE:** Probably, Miss.

**MIZZ:** Oh God. My daddy was right. I should have done architecture.

Exit Mizz.

**HELEN:** Poor ol'Mizz.

**ERICA:** Come here. How will you get them to look like Colin Farrell?

**AISLING:** It's all in the icing, sweetie.

**JENNIFER:** White hair, skirt. *Alexander the Great.*

**LIZ:** Dark hair, mobile phone?

**MARY:** *Phone Booth.*

**LIZ:** Spot on, madam.

**HELEN:** What about his jumper in *Intermission*?

**LOUISE:** We're not doing *Intermission*.

**AISLING:** He was a bit snakey in *Intermission*.

**HELEN:** Mizz alert.

*They get busy as Mizz storms across, backstage. Mary holds up another glued sock – a coin goes in – it stays up. And another coin, and another – success. At Table 1, they're desperately adding milk to the goo. They talk as they work.*

**ERICA:** It won't work if they can't make the chocolate.

**JENNIFER:** We'll make it. It's looking dead-on now.

*She lifts the spoon – it looks more promising.*

**LOUISE** (to an imaginary customer): 'Which would you prefer, Missis? This elegant chocolate recreation of Ireland's own Colin Farrell. Or a sock. With a bit of glue on it.'

*The sock is weighed down with coins, and holding. Mary holds it in the air.*

**MARY:** 'Which would you prefer, Missis? A lump of bad chocolate. Or a money sock. Made from one of Colin Farrell's socks.'

*Erica and Helen are delighted.*

**HELEN** (to Mary): Dead-on, girl.

**ERICA:** Colin Farrell Money Socks.

*She picks up a sock from the pile.*

**ERICA:** This looks like one of his.

*(Table 1 are outraged – their idea is being robbed.)*

**LOUISE:** Hang on.

**HELEN:** Ha ha.

**JENNIFER:** Yeh muppets. You can't do that.

**ERICA:** Do what? Nice one, Mary.

*Mary is pleased. It's a warm moment for her.*

**MARY:** You are welcome.

**LOUISE:** No, she's not welcome. (to Mary) And you aren't either.

**MARY:** (as if – 'Again?') Why not?

**LOUISE:** (mimicking her) Why not?

*Silence – Glares; embarrassment; regret. Mizz crosses backstage; she notes the silence. She looks back as she exits.*

**LOUISE:** Sorry.

*Mary shrugs.*

**LOUISE:** Sorry. Right?

*Mary nods.*

**LOUISE:** I didn't mean it.

**MARY:** Yes, you did.

**HELEN:** Hang on, Mary.

*Mary shrugs.*

**MARY:** The apology; I accept it. Thank you. But I do not accept that you did not mean what you said. How you said it. 'Why not?,' You did mean it.

**ERICA:** Come on, Mar. It's no big deal.

**MARY:** I know.

**LOUISE:** Sorry. (To the others at Table 1): Jesus.

*She regrets saying it; she looks at Aisling. Aisling says nothing. Back to work – uneasy truce.*

**JENNIFER:** (to Table 2) How are you getting on?

**HELEN:** What? Oh. Grand. I think we've found the right glue-to-sock ratio.

*She holds up a sock packed with coins – it holds.*

**ERICA:** I just wish ol' Colin had washed them before he donated them.

*Loud laughter – friends again.*

*Erica lobs at a sock at Table 1. It lands in a mixing bowl.*

**JENNIFER:** Ah!

*Laughter. Jennifer throws the wet sock. It hits Mary. The laughter stops.*

**JENNIFER:** God, sorry.

*But Mary doesn't mind. She flings the sock, and it hits the black-board and Trade Fair sign – just as Mizz enters.*

**MIZZ:** What was that? (Looking down at the sock) Who did that?

*Before Mary can answer –*

**LOUISE:** I did, Miss.

**MIZZ:** Oh, I might have known.

**MARY:** But –

**LOUISE:** I didn't mean it, Miss.

**MIZZ:** You should get those words tattooed across your forehead, Louise. It would save you a lot of bother.

**LOUISE:** Yes, Miss. Sorry.

**MIZZ:** Pick it up out of that and get on with your work.

**LOUISE:** Yes, Miss.

*Mary goes to pick up the sock.*

**MIZZ:** No, Mary. Louise.

*Mizz walks offstage, and Mary continues to the sock. She bends down to pick it up, but Louise gets there before her. They struggle to hold it.*

**LOUISE:** Give it to me.

**MARY:** I threw it.

**LOUISE:** So? She told me to pick it up.

*They almost fight. Aisling and Helen get between them. Louise has the sock.*

**LOUISE:** You could show a bit of gratitude.

*She throws the sock at Mary.*

**HELEN:** Heh!

**AIKLING:** That's out of order, Louise.

**LOUISE:** Standing up for her. I might have known.

**AIKLING:** What d' you mean?

**HELEN:** Oh no, here we go.

**LOUISE:** What do you mean?

**LIZ:** Stop!

**LOUISE:** Stick together, why don't yis.

**LIZ:** Stop!

**MIZZ:** *(from off stage)* What's going on in there?

*They dash back to their places, are suddenly busy. Enter Mizz. She stays, watches. They know they're being watched. Mary wrings the sock, trying to get the chocolate from it. Helen, then Erica, then Mary gets the giggles; it spreads to the other table.*

**MIZZ:** *(as she exits)* God almighty.

*The laughing stops. No one speaks – for several beats.*

**LOUISE:** Sorry – again.

*Mary is expected to reply, accept – but doesn't.*

**LOUISE:** Sorry.

**AIKLING:** What about me?

**LOUISE:** What about you?

**AIKLING:** Are you going to say sorry to me?

**LOUISE:** What for?

**AIKLING:** For what you said?

**LOUISE:** What did I say?

**JENNIFER:** Forget it, Aisling, will you.

*Aisling shrugs, then –*

**AIKLING:** Why should I?

**LOUISE:** What did I say, heh?

**AIKLING:** You said I was standing up for Mary.

**LOUISE:** Well? You were.

**LIZ:** Lay off, Louise.

**LOUISE:** Well, she was. This is stupid.

**LIZ:** You know what she's talking about; come on.

**LOUISE:** What?

**AIKLING:** That I was standing up for Mary cos I'm black.

**LOUISE:** No.

**AIKLING:** Yeah.

**LOUISE:** Well. *(After a pause)* Weren't you?

**AIKLING:** No.

**LOUISE:** Maybe.

**AIKLING:** Don't start, Louise. Just listen.



**LOUISE:** Go on then; go on.

**AISLING:** Are you listening, though?

**LOUISE:** Sorry, I can't hear you. *(after a pause)* I'm listening.

**AISLING:** It's not to do with our colour. You were acting like a bitch.

**LOUISE:** Who was!

**ERICA:** Mizz alert.

*Enter Mizz. They're all busy. Louise is looking daggers at Aisling. No one speaks. Mizz is suspicious. She stops, stares – moves on.*

**MIZZ:** *(sarcastically)* Ireland's future.

*Exit Mizz.*

**HELEN:** Ireland's bloody past. It's safe to talk.

**LOUISE:** Who are you calling a bitch?

**AISLING:** I never said that, heh.

**LOUISE:** You did.

**LIZ:** She didn't.

**LOUISE:** Shut up; she did.

**MARY:** She didn't.

**HELEN:** Shh!

**LOUISE:** Who asked you?

**HELEN:** Too late. Jesus, Mary.

**MARY:** She did not call you a bitch.

*A beat –*

**LOUISE:** And?

**MARY:** And what?

**LOUISE:** Are you calling me one?

**MARY:** No, Louise. I am not.

**LOUISE:** Just as well –

**MARY:** I have no reason to call you that. We're friends.

*Louise doesn't get it; she feels she's being out-manoeuvred.*

**LOUISE:** Yeah. So?

**MARY:** We are friends.

**LOUISE:** I heard you the first time. So?

**MARY:** And you agree?

**LOUISE:** Yeah.

*Behind Louise, Liz and Jennifer silently mouth the word 'So?'*

**LOUISE:** So?

**MARY:** Being someone's friend carries many responsibilities.

**LOUISE:** Jesus lads, Oprah Winfrey's after joining Transition Year.

**MARY:** You know what I mean.

**LOUISE:** Yeah.

*Again, Liz and Jennifer mouth 'So?' But this time Louise is silent.*

**MARY:** You said 'Sorry' but you didn't mean it.

**LOUISE:** You'll have to remind me there, Mary. Why did I apologise?

**AISLING:** Yeah. I forget as well.

**MARY:** Well, I think –

**ERICA:** You don't remember either? This is thick, so it is.

**MARY:** No. I do remember. There are several –

**LOUISE:** Roll them up; let me have them.

**MARY:** You copied the way I speak –

**LOUISE:** Where's the harm in that?

**MARY:** And then denied that you meant it.

**LOUISE:** Well, look it, I'm sorry. But what's so wrong with that? I'm not saying there's anything wrong with you. It's only slagging. We do it here, Mary. All the time.

**HELEN:** She's right, Mar.

**MARY:** I understand. I like it. Slagging is one of the things that I like about living here. It's funny.

**LIZ:** There you go.

**MARY:** But not everything is slagging. It cannot all be explained by 'It's only slagging'.

**AISLING:** She's right.

*Louise shrugs. She decides to say nothing, to let it flow.*

**AISLING:** Being called a nigger isn't slugging.

**LOUISE:** Hang on.

**MARY:** Having your hair pulled isn't slugging. Being told you are not welcome. Is not slugging.

*Louise is suddenly crying, trying not to.*

**LOUISE:** I didn't – I didn't do any of those things. How can you say that I –

*They move, to reassure her.*

**AISLING:** I'm not saying you did. Sorry, Louise.

*Enter Mizz.*

**MIZZ:** What now?

*She sees Louise.*

**MIZZ:** What's happened?

**LOUISE:** Nothing.

**MIZZ:** Is it the Colins, is it?

**LOUISE:** What?

*Mizz looks into the mixing bowl.*

**MIZZ:** It's only chocolate, Louise.

**LOUISE:** Thanks, Miss.

**JENNIFER:** It's fine, Miss.

**LIZ:** Yeah.

**MIZZ:** You want me out of the way, is that it? (looking at Louise, and the others) Sort it out yourselves. (*starting to exit*)

But no violence, right?

**AISLING:** Thanks, Miss.

**MIZZ:** Girls fighting. I'm better off well away from it.

*Exit Mizz.*

**LIZ** (to Louise): Are you okay?

**LOUISE:** Yeah. I'm fine.

**AISLING:** Sorry.

**LOUISE:** I never did any of those things.

**AISLING:** I know.

**LOUISE:** I never called you anything.

**AISLING:** I know. But others do.

**LOUISE:** What others? I'm not others.

*Jennifer is trying to beat life back into the chocolate. Louise blows her nose.*

**JENNIFER** (to Louise): Mind the chocolate, yeh muppet. (to Liz): Get the yoke ready.

*LIZ holds the mould, ready for the chocolate.*

**LOUISE** (to Aisling): And come here. Remember years ago, on the bus, when Bernie Foster's spotty brother told you to get out of your seat. Who was it smacked him in the head for you? It was me.

**AISLING:** I know.

**LOUISE:** Now you remember. (*To Mary*) And I'd do the same for you.

**MARY:** I know.

**HELEN:** You wouldn't smack him now. He's massive these days. He was at The Oasis last Friday.

**MARY:** I would now. I would smack him if he said anything on Mary or Aisling. I wouldn't care how massive he was.

**MARY:** But.

**LOUISE:** What? Do you fancy him too? What's his name anyway?

**ERICA:** She's only pretending.

**HELEN:** Yeah, she knows his name.

**LOUISE:** I don't.

**MARY:** His name is Eric and he spat at my feet last Friday.

*Silence. Jennifer stops mixing, then starts again.*

**HELEN:** On purpose?

*Mary shrugs.*

**HELEN:** God.

**LIZ:** He spat at you?

**MARY:** Yes.

**LIZ:** He's, what? Seventeen?

**HELEN:** He's eighteen,

**LOUISE:** He's dead, is what he is. *(To Mary):* I'll kill him for you.

*Jennifer pours the chocolate into the mould.*

**JENNIFER:** Mind.

**LIZ:** We're fine. I have it.

**LOUISE:** Eric Foster is officially dead, lads.

**HELEN:** Pity. But, yeah; go on. Kill him.

**ERICA:** Give him the chocolate. That'll kill him.

**LOUISE:** Here. Watch yourself, you. There's nothing snakey about our chocolate.

*They all look at the mould.*

**JENNIFER:** Give it another few minutes.

**MARY** (to Louise): Alright?

**LOUISE:** Alright.

**MARY:** I get tired, Louise.

**LOUISE:** Okay.

**MARY:** Yes. When I come up to a door, people either slam it in my face. Or they run to hold it open for me, and they smile and smile and smile, and make me want to disappear into the ground. Do you understand?

**LOUISE:** Yeah.

**MARY:** I want to open the door by myself.

**LOUISE:** Yeah.

**MARY:** It is why I am here. I threw the sock when Mizz walked in; I will pick it up. You say something that I think is unfair; I will tell you that I think it is unfair. Eric Foster spits at me; I will – deal with it.

**LOUISE:** Fine. So, I can't kill him but I can watch you killing him.

**MARY:** Of course.

**LOUISE:** That's not too bad.

**HELEN:** We're looking good here.

*She lines the money-socks on the table. Erica helps her. Mary moves across to their table.*

*Mizz enters.*

**MIZZ:** Is it safe to come in?

**JENNIFER:** Probably, Miss.

**MIZZ:** How's Colin doing?

**LIZ:** We're going to find out now, Miss.

*Work at the money-sock table is abandoned. All watch Liz as she cracks open the mould. All look down at the opened mould.*

**AISLING:** What d'yeh think?

**ERICA:** It's like he's in a little coffin.

**JENNIFER:** It does look like chocolate, doesn't it?

**HELEN:** Ah, yeah. Definitely.

**ERICA:** That's the main thing.

**LOUISE:** It's a bit – I don't know.

**AISLING:** It'll be grand with the icing.

**LOUISE:** Yeah.

*They hesitate, unsure, afraid to take chocolate out of the mould, in case it breaks.*

**MIZZ:** I have to say it, girls. It doesn't look very like Colin Farrell.

**MARY:** Perhaps. But it does look very like Eric Foster.

*They laugh.*

**MIZZ:** What?

**LOUISE:** Chocolate Eric Fosters.

**MIZZ:** What?

**AISLING:** That's dead-on.

**MIZZ:** What?

**JENNIFER:** Brilliant. The last of the chocolate Erics.

**MIZZ:** What?

End

# HANDOUT 2.4

## GUIDELINES ON WRITING

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

**Class 3: Write your own Human Rights Inspired Play / pg.50**

### Composing

- Prewriting: This includes brainstorming, group discussion, research, and reflecting on the genre proposed;
- Drafting: Begin by writing freely to get a flow of ideas underway; trying out paragraphs, viewpoints, testing different approaches, consulting with peers or teachers;
- Redrafting: deciding on the best arrangement of content and ensuring structure is cohesive, finalising paragraphs, dialogue;
- Editing: Rereading to ensure that there is clarity of thought and appropriateness of language;
- Proofreading: checking punctuation, spelling and grammar.

### The Feel Of The Play

- Atmosphere is the feel of the play. It determines how your actors will play their parts, it determines the look of the play, and it is key to visualizing where the play is set and what your characters will look like.

### The Characters

- Your characters are the body of your play. To really get to know your character you need to research the people you are writing your play about. Whether your play/scene is about someone on death row, someone in detention in Guantánamo Bay, or about someone who is experiencing discrimination, you need to try and understand as much as possible about their lives;
- Students should go to Amnesty International Ireland's website [www.amnesty.ie](http://www.amnesty.ie) or [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org) to help them do this research. This research will help you to understand the impact that human rights violations are having on people's lives. It will also help you create believable characters, so when you are doing your research think/imagine what they were like as children, what are their hopes, their dreams and their weaknesses. Try not to stereotype your characters;
- Create or draw up an outline for your characters. When your students are doing this, ask them to consider what motivates their character. What type of work do they do, or their parents do, how much education have they had? What are their home lives like, religion, race and nationality?

### Dialogue

- Dialogue is used to tell us about the characters in the play and it is used to carry a story along. Remember though that its role of carrying the story along needs to be done in a subtle way. Try not to make this part too obvious;
- The dialogue tells us about character - personality, mood. Use it to bring characters to life. Think back to character outline - how do these characteristics influence the dialogue - the way people speak (age, gender, who they are speaking to, polite, rude, formal, informal, slang etc). This helps to make the dialogue believable;
- Pauses can be important too, and what is not said. This might be especially true given the human rights aspect - maybe some of the characters are in situations where they cannot say certain things. The way things are said have consequences. For example, if one character shouts, the other character(s) will react differently than if she/he had whispered;
- As it is a play, the dialogue is important in driving the story too. Think about the pace of the play - how much to reveal and when/how? This can add to the tension - revealing bits of information slowly. Students can also think about the setting, what is going on in the background, or what can be heard in the background (for example some one on death row - can they hear people in other cells, doors opening and closing etc?)

## The Plot

- The plot is what happens in a play, the story. Try to write out the story of your play in a few lines.

## The Storyline

This is where you really begin to flesh out the plot. Your storyline should have a:

- Beginning: This introduces the plot of the play, and describes characters;
- Middle: Develops the story. Are there complications in the character's life? Describe the conflict in the story;
- End: Resolution, or not, of the conflict.

## The Theme Of The Play

This is the driving force behind your play, this is the message you want to get across, and this message will drive your characters in this story. In your human-rights-inspired play this message will be your view on the rights being violated. It is your chance to Voice Your Concern about human rights being abused!

# HANDOUT 2.5

## CHARACTER CARD

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

**Class 3: Write your own Human Rights Inspired Play / pg.50**

**Name:**

**Age:**

Appearance: What does your character look like? (Hair/physical appearance, etc.)	
How does s/he dress? What is his/her favourite outfit?	
What does your character do for a living?	
What are your character's hobbies/interests/likes/ dislikes? How does s/he spend the weekend?	
What is your character's family background?	
Who are your character's best friends? Are there people with whom s/he doesn't get on? Why?	

<p>Describe your character's home.</p>	
<p>What are your character's ambitions/greatest fears?</p>	
<p>How does your character move? What does this show about him/her?</p>	
<p>How does your character speak? What does this show about him/her?</p>	
<p>On the other side of the page, draw an image (any object, e.g. a boat, a tree, etc.) to represent your character.</p>	
<p>Explain why you have chosen this image.</p>	

# HANDOUT 2.6

## DRAMA WARM UP EXERCISES

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

**Class 2: *Voice Our Concern Play* / pg 48**

### Why Use Warm Ups Before Working Through Drama?

People will not always be used to working in this way: warm ups allow people to relax, get used to using the space, become energised, less self-conscious, build concentration and be familiar with, more trusting and open towards one another. Warm up activities also encourage participants to work together and are a prelude to moving beyond normal ways of thinking, interacting and finding solutions. If the games are to be more than an end in themselves, if they are being used as part of a development process for the group/individual/classes development, then it is important to ensure that trust, support and encouragement are built within the group as soon as possible.

66

### Warm Ups: Preparing Participants To Work Through Drama

Warm ups: Depending upon time constraints you can choose which warm ups to do. We have split the warm ups into two sections and we recommend that you use at least one from each section. The exercises are split to focus on physical warm ups, and exercises that focus on building concentration, co-operation and trust within the group.

Adapted from an Abbey Theatre workshop devised by Sharon Murphy

## SECTION 1: PHYSICAL WARM UPS

Directions for facilitator to give to participants:

### A. Swing In Rhythm

- In a circle, shake your right arm 8 times, counting out loud as a group;
- Repeat with the left arm, then right leg, then left leg;
- Repeat the movements to the count of 4, then the count of 2, and finally 1;
- Repeat the movements in sequence.

**Desired outcomes: physically warming-up; energising**

### B. Relax In The Space

- Walk around the room; stretch your body, feel the weight of your feet on the floor;
- Open out your arms, stretch into the space;
- Explore the corners of the room. Explore the angles of the room;
- With your head up and alert, walk at a normal pace, speed up on the count of 5; slow down on the count of 5' change direction;
- Feel your body in the space; investigate the space;
- Feel the space with your arms in front of you and waving around, feel it with your neck and behind your back;
- Feel the space with your whole body and let your hands be as one with your body;
- Feel your bodyshape in the space;
- Now let the space feel you! Let it feel your face, your arms, your legs;
- Go through the space and let the space go through you;
- Did anyone get a feeling of space or of letting space feel you? How did you feel in the space?

**Desired Outcomes: physical warming-up and engaging the body in space; alertness; awareness.**



## C. Near and Far

- Walk around the room;
- As you are walking, decide on one person to whom you want to stay close. Do not make any moves to suggest to us who that person is. When I clap my hands, try to stay close to that person. Clap;
- Continue walking around the space trying to stay close to that person. Clap;
- Think about one person in the room from whom you want to stay far away. Do not make any moves to suggest to us who that person is. When I clap my hands try to stay away from that person. Clap;
- When I clap my hands try to stay away from that person and yet try to get close to the person to whom you had originally wanted to be near. Clap;
- When I clap my hands, freeze. Clap;
- When I clap my hands, move towards the person to whom you wanted to stay close and put your right hand on their right shoulder. Clap;
- When I clap my hands, try to put your left hand on the left shoulder of the person from whom you were trying to stay far away. Clap;

**Desired outcomes: The group should now be an “intimate mess”; physically warmed-up, relaxed and more familiar with one another.**

## D. Chit Chat

- Walk around the space and shake hands with everyone you meet, introducing yourself – just your name;
- Walk around the space, shake hands with everyone that you meet, but this time tell them your favourite colour;
- Walk around the space, shake hands with everyone you meet, and tell them your favourite food.

**Desired outcomes: familiarity with one another.**

# SECTION 2: GROUP WORK AND COOPERATION GAMES

## A. Numbers And Shapes

- Divide participants into groups of 3 or 4;
- As a group, physically make the shape or number I call out. Do this without talking and as rapidly as possible;
- Call out 1, circle, 6, square, Z, X, 4, 8, etc.

**Desired outcomes: cooperation, non-verbal communication.**

## B. Structures

- Divide a large group into smaller groups of 6-8;
- Instruct the group to create a visual image of the object or concept that you are about to call out;
- They should work as a team using their bodies and imagination. Call out the following:
  - An arched bridge
  - A tree
  - A crane
  - Oppression
  - A modern building
  - An aeroplane
  - A car
  - A ship
  - Inequality
  - An antenna
  - A tower
  - A dome

- Justice
- A temple
- Power
- A cathedral
- Exclusion

Ask each group to choose their favourite representation and demonstrate it. The other group(s) must guess which object they are presenting.

**Desired outcomes: the group become physically warmed-up, energy levels begin to increase, they have to use their imaginations and work as a team.**

## C. Pass The Pulse

- Stand in a circle. Hold hands and close your eyes.

The facilitator passes one single pulse beat by tensing his/her hand, and thus the hand that s/he is holding on their left. That person in turn passes the pulse around the circle. The facilitator then tells the group that s/he is going to pass a second pulse in the same direction around the circle. After another minute, the facilitator tells the group that s/he is going to pass a third pulse around the circle, but this time in the opposite direction. There should be three pulses moving around the circle. The facilitator asks the group to freeze. Those with the pulse about their bodies raise their hands in the air. There should be three sets of raised hands!

**Desired outcomes: Concentration, focus, sensitivity, physical awareness, friendship, familiarity, team skills.**

**Finally, ask participants:**

- How do you feel now?
- Why? What happened?
- Was there a change in the dynamic in the room? What was it? What changed it?

# SECTION 3: DRAMA ACTIVITIES

The following are examples of drama activities developed by the Brazilian theatre practitioner, Augusto Boal, as part of his 'Theatre of the Oppressed' series of exercises and games. Each of these activities can be usefully applied in a human rights context.

## Exercise 1: Image Theatre and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Image Theatre uses the human body to represent feelings, ideas and relationships. Through sculpting others or using their own bodies, participants create anything from one-person to large-group image sculptures to reflect their impression of a situation of oppression, and explore how to transform that situation.

In transformative image theatre, spect-actors are first asked to make a visual image (in the form of a group of statues) or scene to reflect a collective perspective on a given theme that they have chosen from the Declaration, for example, racism, violence against women, or poverty.

### STEPS:

1. The students should take a few minutes in their group to discuss what impression of a situation of oppression they want to explore;
2. Then the students should present this image to the class;
3. Students in the class should discuss if they feel the images presented are representative of the situation of oppression. If they do not agree a second spect-actor can remake it differently;

4. The goal is to arrive at an image which represents a consensus among the participants. When, finally, everyone is in agreement, we have the Real Image (that is, the image of reality, the world as it is), which is always the representation of a form of oppression;
5. The spect-actors are then asked to construct the Ideal Image (the image of the world as it could be), in which the oppression has disappeared.
6. Ask the students what is the difference between the Real Image and the Ideal Image?
7. How would they work to achieve this Ideal Image in their school, community?
8. Why did they choose that particular right from the Declaration?

**Extension Activity:**

If you have time to keep working on this activity, participants can be asked to bring their image to life for two minutes improvising the dialogue that would occur in the Real Image, and then thinking about ways that this could be challenged through the Ideal Image and Dialogue. Sometimes when words are brought in, it can bring a new perspective and show new challenges in terms of how a situation can be confronted.

## Exercise 2: Scenes

### STEPS:

1. The class should have their copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
2. Using the main over-arching topic chosen from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights form groups and ask them to devise a scenario that represents a problem within the topic;
3. The scene should only take a few minutes to act out, but it may take the groups 20-30 minutes to formulate them;
4. Ask each group to act out their scenes and facilitate feedback after each one;
5. Ask observers what the issue is?
6. How they feel about it?
7. How they would solve it?
8. Ask the performing team to explain their scene to the class.



Gay rights activists march during a gay pride rally to protest against ongoing discrimination against homosexuals in Warsaw June 10, 2006.  
REUTERS/Katarina Stoltz © Amnesty International.