

Talk about it

SECTION

5

A bit of earth

Objective: To perform a scripted scene making use of dramatic conventions.

What you need: Copies of *The Secret Garden* and photocopiable page 22.

Cross-curricular link: Drama.

What to do

- Hand out copies of photocopiable page 22. Explain that this is a playscript version of the meeting between Mary and Mr Craven in Chapter 12. After recalling where this comes in the story (Mary has already found the secret garden and has begun to work outside), ask the children to read the playscript with a partner.
- After the pairs have read through the script a couple of times, ask them to talk about their readings. What tone did they use? Did they bring their knowledge of Mary to the scene? Did they follow the stage directions and did this change how they acted?

- Ask the children to make suggestions as to why the characters behave as they do. (Mr Craven turns away from Mary because he's not interested in her until he becomes engaged in what she says; he covers his eyes when he thinks of his wife; he smiles when Mary finally wins him over.)
- Challenge the pairs to gradually learn the playscript by heart, practising bits at a time. Explain that it doesn't need to be word perfect but that they do need to capture the essence of the conversation.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Encourage the children to develop the scene either through improvisation or from gathering extra lines from the book.

For younger/less confident learners: Ask the children to practise a version of the scene using the script.

Who said what?

Objective: To understand underlying themes, causes and points of view.

What you need: Copies of *The Secret Garden*, photocopiable page 23, scissors and writing materials.

Cross-curricular link: History.

What to do

- Provide groups of three children with photocopiable page 23.
- Tell the children to take turns to read out the quotes. Can the group agree on who said it?
- Invite the children to discuss when each quote was said, and why. Who was the character talking to? Challenge them to listen to each other and agree on an answer.
- Now ask the children to locate the quotation in their copies of *The Secret Garden*. Tell them

to read the surrounding passage (changing their opinion if necessary) and to write their answers in the table.

- As a whole class, discuss the children's answers (particularly the responses to why the quote was said). Hopefully the children will come up with a range of different suggestions. Talk together about the importance of each quotation in the story and how it feeds into the development of the plot.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Challenge the children to find more quotations in the book that they can use to quiz other children.

For younger/less confident learners: Let the children use a copy of the book during their discussion to help them complete the table.

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