



Sample Pages from
Games for the Drama Classroom: More Than
Play

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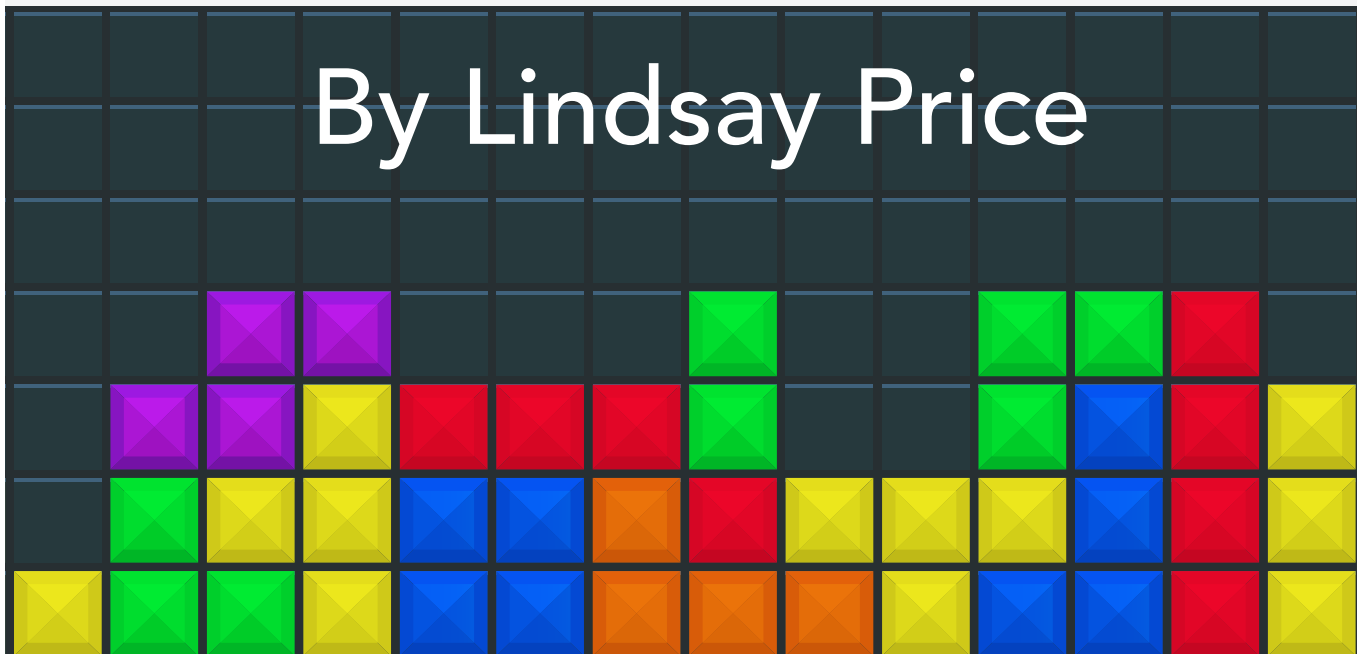
Games

for the Drama Classroom:

More than Play



By Lindsay Price



Games for the Drama Classroom: More than Play
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Games for the Drama Classroom: More than Play



It's long been a criticism of the drama classroom: *They're just playing games.* But the value goes far beyond the notion of "play": communication skills, collaboration skills, team building, focus building, confidence building, and ensemble building can all developed through games.

It is inevitable that you will have students at different learning levels and who respond to different learning methods. You can use games to practically apply concepts that might be missed in a typical classroom setting.

The games in this collection are grouped into specific categories and each is identified with a goal. This way, you don't even have to refer to the activities as games. The next time your admin says *It's just a game*, you can say *THIS is a focus-building activity!*

Lindsay Price



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First Week of School Games



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Game play during the first week of school is necessary – especially if you’re working with new students, or students new to you. Certainly it’s important to introduce the syllabus and classroom expectations. But it’s also important to get your students thinking like an ensemble, used to working in groups, and problem solving in unique scenarios. Game play will let you know how a particular group communicates and collaborates: Who are the leaders? Who hangs back?

Of course, you want games that achieve specific goals. And in the first week, this involves students (and you) getting to know each other, getting used to each other, and getting to know the classroom environment.

As a bonus, this section includes a first day stations activity. Divide students into groups and have each group rotate to a variety of stations that introduce them to each other, to the class, and to the curriculum.

Name Game



Goal: To have students learn about each other

- The class stands in a circle. Each person introduces themselves by saying their name and an action word that begins with the same letter as their first name. *Laughing Lindsay!* The class repeats back the name/action word.
- The class stands in a circle. Each person introduces themselves by saying their name and at the same time makes a large gesture/action to go with their name. This is something that you should model first. The class repeats back the name/action.
- The class stands in a circle. You have a ball. You say your name and lightly toss the ball across the circle. The person who catches the ball says your name and theirs. They toss the ball across the circle. The person who catches it says the name of the person who tossed the ball and their name. After you've been through everyone a couple of times, change it up so that the person who throws the ball has to say the name of the person they're throwing it to.

Not everyone loves a traditional name game, try these alternatives.

- Ask students to count up the letters in their first name. They are to find someone else in the room with the same number. They are now partners. Give students one minute to tell five facts about themselves to their partner. Repeat the process a couple times. Have the group come back together. Each person is to identify another class member they were paired with and say one of the five facts they heard about that person.
- Instead of having everyone introduce themselves by their name, have them introduce themselves by their favourite food: "Hello, I'm carmel corn!" or their favourite colour: "I'm blue!" Once everyone has gone, group them by similar colours or similar foods (all salty foods to the left, sweet foods to the right) and then have them introduce each other.

- One-word emotion. Have everyone go around and identify one word they are feeling at this exact moment. Once everyone has gone, group them by similar feelings and have them talk about why they're feeling that way.

Three Things in Common



Goal: To build community, to use creative-thinking skills, to have students learn about each other

- Get your students moving around the room. Tell them to move swiftly but with purpose – be aware of their surroundings and focus on not bumping into each other. Tell them also not to talk. Head up, walk with purpose, walk with focus.
- Explain to students they are to find someone in the room who they don't know very well. That person is going to be their partner. Before you begin this exercise, pay attention to who students walk into the room with and who they're chatting with. You want students to choose someone new.
- Explain that they have three minutes to find three things in common with their partner. They are not allowed to use "known" things. For example, it is known that they are in the same drama class. It would be a known thing if they both have brown hair or are wearing the same colour shirt. It would not be a known thing that they both have two dogs, or that their families go camping every summer, or that they can curl their tongue. Students will have to question each other quickly and think together to find possible common ground.
- At the end of the three minutes, students are to walk around the room again with purpose and focus. At your signal, they choose a new partner and search for three things in common.
- After a few rounds, gather students in a circle. Each student shares one thing they found they have in common with another student.

Partner Interview



Goal: To build community, to have students learn about each other

- Have students get into pairs. Each pair conducts a mini-interview with each other. They need to find out four things:
 - Their partner's name.
 - One thing their partner did in the summer.
 - One hobby or activity their partner does outside of school.
 - One "favourite" thing their partner likes: favourite colour, food, band, movie, etc. (Let students pick whichever "favourite" they want to share.)
- Give students three minutes to interview each other.
- Then they will stand up with their partner and share each other's answers with the class.

Self-portrait



Goal: To use creative-thinking skills, to have students learn about each other

- Provide paper and coloured pencils for students.
- Tell students that their first task for the class is to draw themselves. But they don't have to be artists or draw themselves true to life. They are going to use shapes, lines, and symbols (for example, hashtag, stop sign, peace sign, hourglass, smiley face).
- Take students through each of the items and have them think about their personality. If they could draw a shape that represents their personality what would it be. Give students suggestions of shapes (circle, square, rectangle, cube, pyramid, star, crescent, oval, prism) and encourage them to think of multiple shapes – we are all not just one thing. You should have an answer for yourself as well:
 - *I would draw a square for myself, because I love nerding out on science fiction. But then in the square I'd draw a star because I'm also an extrovert.*
 - *I would draw a circle for myself because I love getting things done and finishing projects. Also, I'm obsessed with pizza. It makes me happy.*
- Next ask students to think of their personality in terms of lines. Again give examples (curvy, zigzag, straight, slanting, dashed) and model an answer for yourself as well.
- Lastly, ask students to think of their personality in terms of symbols. Give examples and model an answer for yourself as well:
 - *I would draw a treble clef, because music is a big part of my personality. Whatever emotion I'm feeling, I sing about it.*
- It would be helpful to play music during this activity, so that students don't feel self-conscious.

- When everyone is finished, make a gallery of the sheets (stick them to the wall or a large piece of paper) and have students do a walkthrough. Tell students they need to identify and then share one shape, one line, and one symbol that stood out to them.
- Gauge your students. If they want to share the reasoning behind their choices publically, give them the opportunity. If not, have them write a journal entry or an Exit Slip where they describe their reasoning for each element.

Teaching Resources

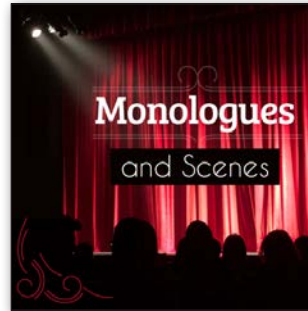
Quality resources to use in your drama classroom



The Drama Classroom Companion

The Drama Classroom Companion is filled with articles and exercises to build the skills needed for theatrical performance as well as real world skills like creative thinking, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.

theatrefolk.com/companion

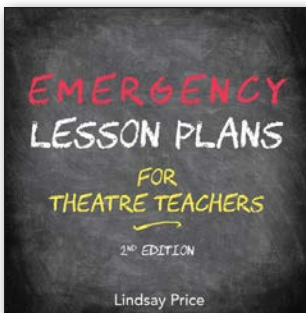


Monologue and Scene Collections

Whether it's for classwork, competitions or auditions, these collections of student-appropriate monologues and scenes can help you find what you're looking for.

All monologues and scenes come from published plays and include running-times, descriptions, character notes and staging suggestions.

theatrefolk.com/collections



Emergency Lesson Plans For Theatre Teachers

Emergency Lesson Plans For Theatre Teachers, 2nd edition gives you the tools and resources you need to confidently leave your class in the hands of a substitute teacher. Customize your lesson plans to suit the specific needs of your class when you can't be there.

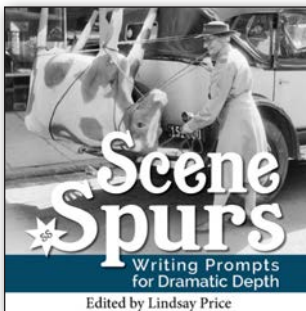
theatrefolk.com/elp



The Student Director's Handbook

Help students take their show from first audition to opening night with *The Student Director's Handbook*. This easy-to-use ebook is full of guidelines, tips and templates designed to help students create a vision, circumvent problems and organize rehearsals on their way to a successful production.

theatrefolk.com/student-director



Scene-Spurs: Writing Prompts for Dramatic Depth

Scene Spurs is a collection of photo-based writing prompts developed by playwright Lindsay Price. The set includes 35 different Spurs along with an instruction guide to integrate them into your drama classroom.

theatrefolk.com/spurs

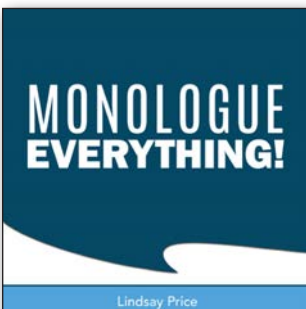


Write Your Own Vignette Play

Your students want to write and perform an original play. You want to include a playwriting unit in your program. But where to start? What if your students have never written a play before? What if you've never written before?

Write Your Own Vignette Play will answer all your questions and more

theatrefolk.com/write_vignette



The Monologue Everything Program

Want your students to write their own monologues? Have you tried to incorporate monologue units into the classroom with less-than-satisfactory results?

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Competition Material

Plays, monologues, and scenes for drama competitions including royalty information and exemptions.

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Practical Technical Theater: The Complete Solution for Technical Theater Classrooms

This series of instructional DVDs is perfect for the teacher who feels more at home with a prompt book than a hammer, and would welcome a new, visually oriented teaching tool for their tech classes and production crews.

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