Story book drama — KITE Arts Education Program @ QPAC

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| Year 3 | The Arts — Drama |
| Students create and perform roles as they participate in a story book drama based on the text *Amy and Louis* by Libby Gleeson and Freya Blackwood. | |
| **Time allocation** | Approximately 1.5–2 hours |
| **Student roles** | Judgments about theindividualstudent work will be made at key moments in the drama experience. |
| Context for assessment  Drama allows us to tell stories to engage in the art of narrative. Storydrama is a process where participants have a shared story (the text) and then a created story (the stories triggered by the drama from the students’ life experiences — their own life stories). The teacher works with the students as co-constructors of a common story, represented through drama.  The *Amy and Louis* story book explores the effects of transience on young lives. Many children experience transience as their families move and change in response to a range of personal, social and environmental influences. This drama aims to build children’s resilience, resourcefulness and empathy as they explore relationships, self care and coping with change. The *Amy and Louis* storydrama requires students to grapple with a range of problems in and out of role, through language, image, sound and movement. | |

******This assessment gathers evidence of learning for the following **Essential Learnings**:

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| The Arts Essential Learnings by the end of Year 3 | |
| Ways of working Students are able to:   * select ideas for arts works, considering particular audiences and particular purposes, using arts elements and languages * create and shape arts works by combining arts elements to express personal ideas, feelings and experiences * practise arts works, using interpretive and technical skills * present arts works to familiar audiences, using arts techniques, skills and processes * follow guidelines to apply safe practices * respond to arts works and describe initial impressions and personal interpretations, using arts elements and languages * reflect on learning to identify new understandings. | Knowledge and understanding *Drama*  Drama involves using dramatic elements and conventions to express ideas, considering particular audiences and particular purposes, through dramatic action based on real or imagined events.   * Role can be established using movement, voice, performance space, cues and turn-taking. * Purpose and context are used to shape roles, language, place and space to express ideas. * Dramatic action is structured by being in role and building storydramas. |
| Assessable elements  * Knowledge and understanding * Creating * Presenting * Responding * Reflecting | |
| Source: Queensland Studies Authority 2007, The Arts Essential Learnings by the end of Year 3, QSA, Brisbane. | |

Links to other KLAs

This assessment could be expanded to assess the following **Essential Learnings**:

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| English Essential Learnings by the end of Year 3 | |
| Ways of working Students are able to:   * identify main ideas and the sequence of events, and make simple inferences * interpret how people, characters, places, events and things have been represented * identify audience, purpose and text type. | Knowledge and understanding *Speaking and listening*  Speaking and listening involve using oral, aural and gestural elements to interpret and construct texts that achieve purposes in familiar contexts.   * Words and phrasing, volume and pitch can add interest and emphasis, clarify meaning and be monitored by listeners. * Nonverbal elements, including body language, facial expressions and gestures, add interest and emphasis, clarify meaning and are monitored by listeners.   *Language elements*  Interpreting and constructing texts involve exploring and using grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, audio and visual elements, in print-based, electronic and face-to-face modes (speaking and listening, reading and viewing, writing and designing) in familiar contexts.   * Vocabulary describes, labels and sequences, and can represent people, characters, places, events and things. * Auditory, spoken, visual and nonverbal elements provide details necessary for making meaning about the representations of people, places and things. |
| Source: Queensland Studies Authority 2007, English Essential Learnings by the end of Year 3, QSA, Brisbane. | |

This assessment could be expanded to assess the following **Essential Learnings** if the process drama was developed to focus on key visual art elements and processes.

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| The Arts Essential Learnings by the end of Year 3 | |
| Ways of working Students are able to:   * select ideas for arts works, considering particular audiences and particular purposes, using arts elements and languages * create and shape arts works by combining arts elements to express personal ideas, feelings and experiences * respond to arts works and describe initial impressions and personal interpretations, using arts elements and languages. | Knowledge and understanding *Visual Art*  Visual Art involves using visual arts elements, concepts, processes and forms (both 2D and 3D) to express ideas, considering particular audiences and particular purposes, through images and objects.   * Warm (red, orange, yellow) and cool (blue, green, purple) colour schemes, and mixed and complementary colours, are used to create tone and variation. * Line is used to suggest movement and direction. * Regular, irregular, open, enclosed, overlapped and adjacent shapes are used to create categories and position. * Texture is used to create variation and repetition. |
| Source: Queensland Studies Authority 2007,*The Arts Essential Learnings by the end of Year 3*, QSA, Brisbane. | |

Listed here are suggested **learning experiences** for students before attempting this assessment.

* Participate in drama activities that involve *accepting the fiction* (going along with a pretence, perhaps in another time or place), *accepting the role* (pretending to be someone else) and *“suspending disbelief”* (believing in a fictional situation).
* Explore establishing different roles using movement, voice and performance space.
* Respond to “teacher-in-role” situations allowing students to respond to shifts in teacher power and status.
* Allow opportunities to be involved in *conventions* of storydrama (see Appendix A) including:
* role
* writing in role
* teacher in role
* freeze-frame
* thought-tracking
* hot-seating
* gossip mill
* frozen effigy
* ritual.
* Provide opportunities using different purposes and contexts (situations) to shape roles, language, place and space to express ideas.
* Explore structuring dramatic action by being in role and building storydramas (e.g. based on work currently doing in class — a book, a SOSE issue, a Science activity).

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| Icon_Resource | Teacher resources |

### Texts

O’Toole, J & Dunn, J 2002, *Pretending to learn: Helping children learn through drama*, Pearson Education, Australia.  
This text provides detailed information for teaching drama in the primary classroom including —drama teaching structures, techniques, strategies, and approaches for the classroom, exemplars of extended drama work and ideas for planning, assessment strategies and classroom management.

Neelands, J & Goode, T 2000, *Structuring drama works: a handbook of available forms in theatre and drama* (2nd edition), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.   
This text combines theory and practice into three sections: (1) catalogue of techniques and lessons plans at multi-grade levels — almost like a recipe file, (2) practical information about structuring drama for learning opportunities, (3) in-depth look at theatre as a learning process.

Ackroyd, J & Boulton, J 2001, *Drama lessons for five to eleven-year-olds*, David Fulton Publishers, London.   
A selection of drama lessons for the early childhood and primary teacher.

Winston, J & Tandy, M 2001, *Beginning Drama 4–11* (2nd edition), David Fulton, London.  
This text contains many activities and units including games, storydrama and performance. Also some useful and practical curriculum planning and assessment strategies.

### Websites

Drama Queensland is a non-profit professional association supporting approx 400 drama educators. Members work in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors in the areas of drama or arts education. A number of resources can be accessed through DQ membership: <www.dramaqueensland.org.au> (accessed 18th April, 2008).

A definition of process drama and provides tools for process drama exploration: <www.education.byu.edu/arts/documents/21Red-HotProcessDramaTools.doc> (accessed 18th April, 2008).

An example of a process drama with a text: <www.education.byu.edu/arts/lessonplans/documents/  
processdramafromtextTheLostBoysofSudan.doc> (accessed 18th April, 2008).

Preparing

Set up a large open space free of chairs and tables.

### Agreeing to accept the fiction

Expectations of appropriate behaviour, and the boundaries of dramatic fantasy and reality, need to be clearly negotiated. In the beginning of the drama session, a verbal or written contract between students and the teacher can make these expectations explicit. A nod of agreement in response to a question such as, “When I am holding this broom I am going to be the cleaner of the classroom. Are you prepared to believe that?” is sufficient. You may wish to talk about working in a drama context to clarify the expectations within your classroom. It is sometimes useful to review these expectations in continuing sessions. Maintaining clear expectations assists students to sustain focus during drama sessions.

## Implementation

Consider these points when implementing the assessment.

* Good drama tends to be slow and low-key rather than excited and frenetic. This may seem oddly “undramatic” but it is crucial to depth and effective work.
* Building belief in the drama, in creating role or roles and building tension takes time.
* Students will work through the story book drama as a whole class, small groups and as an individual.
* In group work, consider friendship patterns based on strengths and weaknesses and use them positively. The teacher can organise groups to give students opportunities to work with less familiar people and encourage those who are passive to take on a more active role.
* Sensitivity is required when dealing with issues raised by students in relation to this story. Consider those children who have had to move and change locations. The opportunity to explore these events and issues in a fictional context may assist some children to express personal ideas and concerns, while others may feel uncomfortable dealing with these matters.

Adapted from O’Toole, J & Dunn, J 2002, *Pretending to learn: Helping children learn through drama*, Pearson Education, Australia.

### Key moments for assessable elements

While the teacher needs to consider the whole storydrama when gathering evidence about student work it might be beneficial to focus on key moments for considering creating, presenting, responding and reflecting. Suggested key moments have been identified in the Implementation table that follows.

It would also be beneficial to video or take digital images of these key moments to support judgments made.

### Time

While it would be ideal to run the storydrama in one session, teachers may find appropriate sections of the drama for separate lessons. It would be important to revise previous lesson ideas to focus the students back into the drama.Sample implementation plan

This table shows one way that this assessment can be implemented. It is a guide only — you may choose to use all, part, or none of the table. You may customise the table to suit your students and their school environment.

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| **Suggested time** | **Student activity** | **Teacher role** | |
| **Section 1. Orientating phase:** Setting the rules of engagement, trust building, activating prior knowledge, speculating and predicting | | |
| 5–10 min | **Accepting the fiction:** Students are invited into the drama. They agree to take part and prepare for enrolling. | Set up environment where students agree to take part in the drama and understand what they are agreeing to. |
| 5 min | **Freeze:** Students move around an open space taking care not to touch or bump others. They must all try to walk at the same pace, set and modelled by the teacher. Teacher calls “freeze!” and students must stop and be still like statues. Holding their poses, students may only blink and breath until the teacher directs them to walk again. | Guide students through working in an open space adhering to rules of activity and learning to care for themselves and others. |
| 5–10 min | **Warm up:** Students respond to teacher asking them how they might meet someone new or make friends at school, i.e. wave, say hello, smile or shake hands. Students walk around the space and as the teacher calls each suggestion out loud children enact the word with the person nearest to them. | Guide students as necessary as they begin to explore body language, gesture and its meaning. Encourage students to share knowledge of communication with the class and act out their skills.  Suggestions for activity:  *How might we say with our bodies:*  “hello”  “come here”  “good job!”  What about making friends — what gestures would we use? |
| 5 min | **Clumps:** Students walk the space. Teacher calls out a number and students must quickly gather into groups of that number. When each group is formed students bob to the ground. This process is repeated several times. The final group is a group of 2 or 3. | Encourage students to work cooperatively.  Form groups at the end. |
| 5–10 min | **Freeze frame:** In groups of 2 or 3 students create a freeze frame (or tableau) depicting a particular object, e.g. a house, a suitcase, a wheelbarrow, an umbrella, a cloud, a boat, a city.  **Key moments for assessable elements: Creating, Presenting** | Encourage students to articulate within a visual language creating images from a text. |
| 5 min | **Reading:** Students listen as teacher begins to read *Amy and Louis* by Libby Gleeson and Freya Blackwood. | Read to “with secrets to share” (page 8).  Ensure quiet and focused listening. |
| 5–10 min | **Call and response:** Two volunteers become A and B. The pair decides on a call. They may repeat Amy and Louis’ “cooee” or make up their own call. A is blindfolded while B moves as far away as the room will allow. B begins to call and A must follow the sound until they touch hands while the class watches. This may be done with more than one pair, depending on the group. | Provide opportunities for students to explore the conceptual territory of the drama and relate it to prior knowledge. They “physicalise” notions of separation and connection through play. |

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| **Suggested time** | **Student activity** | **Teacher role** | |
| 1–2 min | **Reading:** Students listen as teacher continues reading *Amy and Louis*. | Read to “a long, long way away” (page 9).  Ensure quiet and focused listening. |
| 5–10 min | **Gossip Mill:** Students speculate on where and why Amy might have gone.  Students walk around the room. On a signal (e.g. hand clap) they stop and share verbally with another class member near them where they think Amy might have gone. “Amy’s gone …”  If students like an idea, they capture it and spread it around. Otherwise, they can stick with their own ideas. Students keep sharing until they have had a chance to speak to six or seven people, changing ideas as they wish.  Students then repeat the gossip mill activity speculating on why did Amy leave? “Amy left because…”  **Key moments for assessable elements: Creating** | Encourage students to work cooperatively to create moving physical formation.  Provide opportunities for students to speculate using prior knowledge and their imaginations. |
|  | **Respond and reflect:** Students are asked these questions:  What reasons did you hear for where and why Amy left in the gossip mill?  **Key moments for assessable elements: Responding, Reflecting** | Ask for student oral response to questions — involve all students to gather evidence of their responding and reflecting. |
| 15–20 min | **Models:** In groups of 4 or 5 students build the place that Amy might have gone to. Using found objects glue and scissors children create a model of Amy’s new environment.  On completion, students are given a small cut-out figure of Amy to place within their model. They consider where and why they are placing her. | Prepare materials in advance for each group and offer limited amount of materials to work with. See Appendix B for cut-out figure of Amy.  Organise students to work in teams. Monitor students as they practise their communication and negotiation skills to create an imagined place.  Encourage students to make design choices using space, shape and texture.  Ask students: “Where is Amy? Why have you placed her here?”  Alternative ideas if materials not available:  Create a freeze frame or tableaux of the place Amy has gone.  Draw a picture of the place Amy might have gone.  Note: Creating the model is the preferred option as it builds a sense of set construction and movement of character in the space. |
|  | **Respond or reflect:** After looking at other people’s ideas:  What sort of place has Amy gone to?  Why did you choose this place?  How would Amy be feeling about this new place?  What would Amy’s new place look like? Smell like? Sound like? Feel like?  **Key moments for assessable elements: Responding, Reflecting** | Teacher questions students as they share their work with the class. Teacher acts as provocateur, asking students to elicit deeper understanding.  Engage all students to gather evidence of their responding and reflecting. |
| 5 min | **Reading**  Students listen as teacher continues reading *Amy and Louis*. | Read to “She thought about Louis every night and every day” (page 15).  Ensure quiet and focused listening. |

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| **Suggested time** | **Student activity** | **Teacher role** | |
| **Section 2. Enhancing phase:** Enrolling; posing problems; adding and reviewing | | |
| 8–10 min | **Frozen effigy:** Students respond to the image of Amy (page 15). Students examine her position and try to empathise with the character, reading her body language to elicit meaning.  **Reflect and respond on image**  How is Amy feeling?  How do we know? What is her body telling us about how she feels?  What might she be thinking? | Provide opportunities where students use their emotional intelligence to empathise with the character, reading her body language to elicit meaning.  Encourage students to deepen their understanding of the situation through investigation. |
| Students are now encouraged to find out how Amy is feeling.  One student is selected to be in role as Amy.  One at a time other students may approach and touch Amy and animate the frozen image. When animated, children can ask Amy questions as above.  For example:  “How are you feeling?”  “What are you thinking about?”  **Key moments for assessable elements: Responding, Reflecting** | Select a student to be in role as Amy. Choose someone who is focused and obviously interpreting drama well. Teacher still acts as facilitator to guide student’s response to the rest of the class.  Teacher may wish to add an article of costume for Amy character to wear while in role. |
| 5–10 min | **Spectrum of emotion:** Several students chosen from the group stand behind the effigy of Amy (the student role playing Amy) and shape their bodies to demonstrate an emotion they feel she might be experiencing until a variety of emotions are exhibited. | Encourage students to respond through movement to show the range of emotions Amy might be feeling.  Provide suggestions to stimulate responses, e.g. sad, confused.  Guide physical responses with statements such as:  “How would you hold your body if you were sad?” (or confused etc)  “Where would you place your arms?”  “Where would you look?” |
| 5 mins | **Thought tracking emotions (touch and talk):** Students respond to teacher asking them to freeze in a chosen shape and respond as Amy when the teacher touches them with “Amy feels … ”  **Key moments for assessable elements: Creating, Presenting** | Provide opportunities for all students to articulate their emotions. |
| **Section 3. Synthesising:** Drawing inferences and conclusions | | |
| 5 min | **Reading:** Students listen as teacher continues reading *Amy and Louis* to the end. | Ensure quiet and focused listening. |
| 5 min | **Discussion:** Students respond to teacher as they return to page 22 of the book.  What happened? Did Amy and Louis communicate? How?  Students consider what thoughts Louis might have sent into the clouds at the point of story where “Louis fell back … ” | Allow students to explore feelings of loss and confusion. Encourage students to rely on their own resourcefulness, strength and imagination to move forward in positive ways. |

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| **Suggested time** | **Student activity** | **Teacher role** | |
|  | **Respond or reflect:**  What message might Louis have sent to Amy?  How was Louis feeling at this time?  **Key moments for assessable elements: Responding, Reflecting** | Ask for student response to questions —engage all students to gather evidence of their responding and reflecting. |
| 10–15 min | **Writing in role as Louis:** Students are given white cut-outs of clouds on which they write a short message to Amy.  **Models:** Students decorate their messages with cotton wool and attach them to their models of Amy’s home with paddle pop sticks or alternately glue on to their drawings of Amy’s home.  Students read other people’s messages.  **Key moments for assessable elements: Responding** | Encourage students to write as if they were Louis.  Encourage students to take positive action to alleviate stress or concern.  If alternate model is used:   1. If a freeze frame is done read the cloud messages as the frame is presented. 2. If a drawing is completed glue on the cloud message. |
| 5 min | **Ritual:** Students think about someone they haven’t seen in a while. Remembering Louis spreading his arms and throwing back his head, the class copy the actions together with the teacher calling out “Cooee” to someone they are missing.  **Key moments for assessable elements: Presenting** | Encourage all students to be actively involved. |
| 5 min | **Reflect and respond:** Students respond as teacher concludes the drama and ask children for questions, comments and thoughts.  **Key moments for assessable elements: Responding, Reflecting** | Encourage students to reflect on the drama drawing inferences and making connections with their own life experience.  Draw together the ideas that the students have provided and that the class has explored together. The conclusion to the drama should discuss as many of the independent play ideas of the students as possible. |
| **After the drama**  (5–10 min) | **Informal reflection on storydrama:** Students participate in a class discussion to look at processes they used in the drama and possible applications for future learning. | Possible questions to guide this discussion:  Why do we need to warm up?  What do we need to do in a freeze frame?  How easy was it to make the object in a freeze frame?  What made it easy to see the objects created by others in their freeze frame?  How can you tell if someone is in or out of role?  What parts of the drama did you like best?  How did you feel when you were in role?  What role did you like best?  What advice can we offer Amy and Louis? |

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| Icon_Resource | Resources for the assessment |

Appendix A Drama glossary

Appendix B Images of Amy

*Amy and Louis* text

Blindfold

Cardboard bases (photocopy paper box lids are good)scraps of card, paper cylinders, boxes

Glue, tape and scissors

White cardboard cut into the shape of clouds (one per student), cotton wool and glue.

During the learning process, you and your students should have developed a shared understanding of the curriculum expectations identified as part of the planning process.

After students have completed the assessment, identify, gather and interpret the information provided in student responses. Use only the evidence in student responses to make your judgment about the quality of the student learning. Refer to the following documents to assist you in making standards-referenced judgments:

* *Guide to making judgments*
* *Indicative A response*
* *Sample responses* (where available).

### Making judgments about this assessment

Teachers are encouraged to find key moments within the storydrama to find evidence for making judgments about student work. These are identified clearly in the implementation table. Videoing sections of the storydrama or taking digital photographs may also provide further evidence for the teacher who may be in role at times and unable to write observations or comments regarding student responses.

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| Icon_ForFurtherHelp | For further information, refer to the resource *Using a Guide to making judgments*, available in the Resources section of the Assessment Bank website. |

Evaluate the information gathered from the assessment to inform teaching and learning strategies.

Involve students in the feedback process. Give students opportunities to ask follow-up questions and share their learning observations or experiences.

Focus feedback on the student’s personal progress. Emphasise continuous progress relative to their previous achievement and to the learning expectations — avoid comparing a student with their classmates.

### Giving feedback about this assessment

Teachers are encouraged to give feedback to students throughout the storydrama either to the whole group or individual students as appropriate.

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| Icon_ForFurtherHelp | For further information, refer to the resource *Using feedback*, available in the Resources section of the Assessment Bank website. |

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| ***Drama glossary*** |
| **Accepting the fiction**  An implicit or explicit agreement to go along with a pretence. Students accept that drama is about pretending and that they, their teachers or actors involved in the drama will be pretending to be someone other than themselves and perhaps in another time or place. |
| **Accepting the role**  Students agree to go along with the pretence and accept roles suggested by the leader of the drama or each other. The acceptance may be implicit (when they engage in structured activities while in role) or signalled by the student wearing something (e.g. a badge, a scarf) to show they are in role. |
| **Suspending disbelief**  The agreement to go along with the pretence and move from the real context into the dramatic context. Evident when objects, language, visual images or movement express a particular dramatic meaning. Some objects and images are already rich in symbolic association (e.g. a crown) but others may be invested with symbolic significance because of the ways they are used in a drama. |
| **Storydrama**  Storydramas involve teachers engaging students in dramatic exploration of an idea or event drawn from a story. This term has quite different connotations from story enactment or dramatisation. The latter implies a literal re-enactment of narrative and its characters.  Storydrama uses the issues, themes, characters, mood, conflict or spirit of a known story as a frame for improvisatory exploration. In this form of drama the focus is on an uncertainty, a fascinating idea, or an event or detail that is not fully explored within the original story. |
| **Conventions**  Particular techniques and strategies used in dramatic action and frequently linked to particular forms and styles of theatre. Each form or style of theatre uses a particular set of conventions that distinguishes that form or style from others. For example the conventions of improvisation include making and accepting offers, and being “in the moment”, and conventions of forum theatre include the use of the “joker” or facilitator, audience participation, and subject matter that explores different types of oppression.  A useful text linking conventions to classroom practice is: Neelands, J 1990, *Structuring Drama Work*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. |
| The conventions used in this storydrama assessment are: |
| **Teacher-in-role**: This is an extremely useful drama strategy. It allows you to model being in‑role or out-of-role to students, and to control the direction of the drama narrative from inside the imaginary context. |
| **Freeze frames**: Individuals or groups form a physical image using their own bodies to create dramatic impact — also called a still image or “tableau”, from the French word meaning “living picture”. The students watching close their eyes while the presenting group prepares each frame. On a signal, the watchers open their eyes and view each frame, which is held for about five seconds. A sequence of about three frames is often needed to convey extended action or story. |
| **Frozen effigies**: An effigy is a person (teacher or student) dressed for a particular role and placed, frozen in statue form, against an appropriate background. The effigy may be “brought to life” by a tap on the shoulder to answer specific questions before freezing again. Answers should not be elaborated, so that learners will be encouraged to ask further questions. Ideally, the effigy should be placed in a room into which the students can enter for the purpose of the interview. Once the questioning is completed, the students should leave the effigy and return to their regular classroom for further discussion. |
| **Role**: One of the elements of drama. When taking on a role you are simply representing a point of view as someone other than yourself. |
| **Tap and talk (Thought tracking)**: Participants in a freeze frame or tableau are tapped on the shoulder and speak aloud a response to the dramatic situation. |
| **Writing-in-role**: Individuals or groups write in the first person as the role they are playing. They may write letters, diary entries and personal reminders or reflections. |
| **Ritual**: A stylised enactment. This is presented in a highly controlled and often repetitious manner, to formalise or provide specific significance to a situation. |
| **Gossip mill**  Students mill around the room. When you signal by clapping hands, students stop and tell the person next to them their idea. “I’ve heard that Amy is … living in New York in a big building on the 45th floor”. If they like an idea, they capture it and spread it around. Otherwise, they can stick with their own ideas. Keep sharing until the students have had a chance to speak to six or seven people, changing ideas as they wish. |
| Adapted from: Drama Glossary — CD-ROM — The Arts Years 1 to 10 Curriculum Materials, Queensland School Curriculum Council (2002). |

***Images of Amy***



