

History through stories and role play

By [Sriparna Tamhane](#) | Aug 22, 2012

Stories and role-playing give students the opportunity to unlock their imagination, and develop verbal intelligence and understand multiple points of view. What better way to learn history than this?

Duration:

02 hours 00 mins

Introduction:

Storytelling connects children directly to the past in an interesting manner. Stories unlock the children's imagination and make the past intelligible to them. Stories can also be used to develop the cognitive, kinesthetic and the affective domains. Role-play gives the students the opportunity to demonstrate verbal intelligence, bodily kinesthetic intelligence and musical intelligence. Role play can also develop in children, an appreciation for multiple perspectives. It can enable students to see an event/story from different points of view. Storytelling and role-play can also develop criticality, self-awareness and reflection in children.

Support Material:

 [the_story_of_the_buddha.ppt](#)

 [resource_2_-_the_story_of_the_buddha.pdf](#)

Steps:

Step 1: The story of the Buddha (30 min)

Show the PPT on the story of the Buddha or read out the story of the Buddha. ([Resource 1 –PPT](#) or [Resource 2-The story of the Buddha](#))

Ask the students to identify and note down the historical facts that they gathered from the story. Question the participants who choose a particular aspect as a historical fact, why he/she thinks it is as a fact and not a figment of imagination.

Ask them to note down anything that was inspiring or interesting about the character or the story and explain why.

Step 2: Creating dialogues (30 min)

Divide the participants into four groups

Ask the students to work in groups and create dialogues for a play on the life of the Buddha and prepare for a presentation of the play. You could encourage the participants to write the play from different perspectives, that of Siddhartha (Buddha), of Siddhodhana (the father of Siddhartha), Yashodhara (the wife of Siddhartha), Rahul (the son of Siddhartha) etc. Any musical component in the play could be welcome.

Notes to the teacher: History is often written from the perspective of one person. It is important for students of History to view events from different perspectives. Refer to the lesson plan on developing empathy for more details.

Step 3: Presentation of play (30 min)

Ask the students each group to present one version of the play while the others watch.

Notes to the teacher: According to the theory of Multiple Intelligence proposed by Howard Gardner, children display different kinds of intelligence. While writing the script of a play for example, children display linguistic intelligence (related to the use of language). While presenting a play they display body kinesthetic intelligence (related to physical movement, sense of timing etc). Working together in a group requires inter -personal skills (the ability to relate and work with others). An activity like role play gives the students the opportunity to display their intelligence in a variety of ways.

Step 4: Asking questions (30 mins)

Ask the students to note down three of the most important questions of their lives.

Ask them to share the questions with others.

Notes to the teacher: The most important questions a student asks may differ from simple questions about things around them to deep questions like "What happens to us after we die"? Encourage all questions. All questions need not have one answer and it is not necessary for the teacher to answer them immediately. It is important for students to ask the questions and explore them over a period of time. The history class gives the opportunity to trigger deeper questions and make students reflect.

Assessment:

Continuous and comprehensive assessment happens through the following activities:

- Listening to a historical story on the life of Buddha, comprehending it and enacting it.
- Identifying historical facts in the story
- Justifying why the story was inspiring
- Rebuilding the story in a sequential manner and create dialogues
- Creating perspectives from the point of view of different characters
- Identifying the three most important questions in their lives.

Objective:

- Listen to a historical story on the life of Buddha and comprehend it
- Identify historical facts in the story
- Justify why the story was inspiring
- Rebuild the story in a sequential manner and create dialogues
- Recognize perspectives from the point of view of different characters
- Represent the story through a role play
- Identify the three most important questions in their lives.

Category:

Classroom Resources

Subject: Social Studies

Board: All boards

Grade/Standard: Class 6-8

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