

DRAMA PHILOSOPHY

of the Erickson Drama/Learning Program

Coming from the individual, discovered through play, moving toward THEATER

Drama is an organized exploration into self-awareness and self-expression using movement, verbalization, and role-playing. It creates an environment that allows the participant to safely explore his or her own feelings, behavior, and ideas. Participants in drama learn to create new perspectives from familiar actions, stretch the imagination, and share experiences that work as a springboard for group interaction and cooperation.

Drama is a natural process through which human beings can explore and expand their own ideas and potential. Drama is process centered; theater is product centered. Drama is for all growing humans; theater is for the talented. Drama is a basic human art form from which the more complex art of theater sprang. Drama is where we begin so that theater might evolve.

Underlying Beliefs

These are a few of the beliefs underlying the philosophy that governs this drama program. These statements should give you insight into the development of the curriculum.

- Drama is for *all* growing humans, infant through senior adult.
- Any lesson can be modified and used for and with any age older than its original intent. Many lessons can also be altered for younger ages.
- This program focuses solely on drama in kindergarten through third grade. There is a minor transition to theater in grades four through six. A solid introduction to theater is introduced in grades seven through eight. This follows educationally appropriate practices based on current brain and child development research.
- Anyone who has been a child and who has played can learn to teach drama.
- Emotional, intellectual, and physical safety is of utmost importance in teaching drama and should be built into every lesson.
- When people are joyful, learning occurs naturally and at a deeper level of understanding. Drama is a powerful tool when connected to other content areas, because joy is part of the process.



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The Mission

This book is a first step in introducing students and teachers to drama and creative expression through movement, verbalization, and role-playing. This book is intended to jump start any teacher or class unfamiliar with drama. This program lets teachers implement and *experiment* with the creative process and the basic skills of drama, while stimulating learning and integrating drama with other curricular areas. Teachers are supported through training and can receive help by contacting the author. Teachers familiar with drama are encouraged to quickly move beyond this text to the Grade Level Guides, also part of the Erickson Drama/Learning Program.

Program Goals

The goals of the program are to enable **students** to:

- develop poise, initiative, and ways to express their ideas clearly;
- work cooperatively with others;
- gain experience in, and an aesthetic appreciation for, drama as an art form;
- learn the vocabulary of the art form;
- develop skills of evaluation, self-management, and audience response;
- understand the cultural, social, and historical significance of drama/theater;
- understand the artistic process, the craft processes, and the tools of drama/theater.

The goals of the program are to enable **teachers** to:

- gain experience with this art form as a teaching methodology;
- learn to incorporate the knowledge and skills of the art form into their daily teaching;
- integrate drama with the teaching of other curricular subjects.

