

THE DRAMATIC METHOD OF TEACHING

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649125258

The dramatic method of teaching by Harriet Finlay-Johnson

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

HARRIET FINLAY-JOHNSON

**THE DRAMATIC
METHOD OF
TEACHING**



THE "TIG" SHED IN COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION.

THE DRAMATIC METHOD OF TEACHING

BY

HARRIET FINLAY-JOHNSON

EDITED BY

ELLEN M. CYR

AUTHOR OF THE CHILDREN'S READERS



GINN AND COMPANY

BOSTON · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · LONDON

PREFACE

I undertook with great pleasure the task of editing this book for the inspiration and guidance of the teachers in America. Every page is imbued with the spirit of joy and life, — natural, spontaneous life, — recognizing the rights of a child to his own point of view with his own limitations.

Education *is* life, not just the preparation *for* life. Some one has said that education is "being at home in God's world," and another educator gives the following beatitude: "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after the knowledge of how to direct instead of suppress the spontaneous activities of childhood, seeking to transmute what is evil into good, for they shall make happy and competent and well-behaved children."

The best teachers are those who lead their pupils into activities which, based upon the fundamental instincts of child nature, are to test and examine everything and to attempt all feats.

Miss Finlay-Johnson recognizes her pupils as little men and women who have a right to appropriate just that part of this world which belongs to childhood, and in her school the children live in a world of their own and look upon life through their own childish vision. They enact again the events of history, literature, and geography,

and fill even the arithmetic lessons with life and action. In the study of history the characters are released from their imprisonment between the covers of the books; they don their regalia and, stepping out of the prosy pages, live their lives again and perform once more their deeds of courage and prowess. This dramatic work brings the children into closer relationship, awakening sympathy between the pupils and teacher, and fosters class spirit. It also gives the forward children opportunities for leadership, and offers a natural outlet for spontaneity and enthusiasm. Ingenuity, individuality, and imagination are developed when the children make their own stage properties, as they were led to do by Miss Finlay-Johnson.

A child enters school during the years of the play period. "Shades of the prison house begin to close upon the growing boy," and it seems hardly fair to confine him in a schoolroom during this time. Activities at this age mean much more than objects to the child, and, in justice to his development, every means to educate him by play should be employed. If he finds himself repressed on every side, he becomes discouraged and loses interest in his lessons; and the depression which is likely to follow retards his mental growth. His interest is most quickly aroused in results brought about by his own activities. Wise is the teacher who fosters the enthusiasm and elasticity of these early years, and helps the child to realize the forces that exist within him.

This dramatic work should be kept simple. Miss Finlay-Johnson realizes this and also the danger of working for

theatrical effects. She avoids this danger by engaging the whole class in most of the plays, and by letting the children suggest their own methods of acting. It is interesting to note the way in which Miss Finlay-Johnson introduces acting into the various branches of study. The dolls in the geography lessons impersonate the inhabitants of the various countries, and the children interest themselves in the clothing adapted to the various countries and climates. A prominent educator says, "there is more philosophy and poetry in a single doll than in a thousand books."

I hope many of our American teachers will learn lessons from the experiences of Miss Finlay-Johnson in her work in "the little school on the Sussex Downs, where children and teachers lived for a space in the world of romance and happiness." She preaches "the gospel of happiness in childhood for those who will be the world's workers and fighters to-morrow," and it is her conviction that "fleeting childhood's days should be filled with joy."

Acknowledgment is made for permission to use illustrations from the dramatic work in the schools of New Haven, Connecticut, and Holyoke, Massachusetts.

ELLEN M. CYR

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	3
✓ II. THE TEACHING OF HISTORY BY PLAYS	18
III. THE ADAPTED PLAY	44
IV. THE ORIGINAL PLAY	56
V. THE SHAKESPEAREAN PLAY	77
VI. A GIRLS' PLAY	109
VII. LITERATURE	118
✓ VIII. GEOGRAPHY	133
IX. ARITHMETIC AND COMPOSITION	169
X. NATURE STUDY NEWLY APPROACHED	178
XI. MANUAL WORK	187
XII. AFTER SCHOOL AGE	191
INDEX	197

FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
THE "TIG" SHED IN COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION . . . Frontispiece	
"IVANHOE"—THE ARREST OF MALVOISIN	5
REDCROSS KNIGHTS IN ARMOR OF TEA PAPER	11
THE CORONATION OF WILLIAM AND MARY	23
THE KNIGHTING OF RALEIGH	29
THE COLLAPSE OF MRS. MICAWBER WHEN SHE SEES DAVID COPPERFIELD AFTER HER RETURN	45
Photograph taken at the Highland School, Holyoke, Mas- sachusetts	
COMBAT BETWEEN RODERICK DHU AND FITZ-JAMES	49
Photograph taken at the Highland School, Holyoke, Mas- sachusetts	
A PART OF THE "CHRISTMAS CAROL" FESTIVAL	53
LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD	59
Photograph taken at New Haven, Connecticut	
THE SUN AND THE WIND (THE WIND SHOWS HIS POWER)	65
Photograph taken at New Haven, Connecticut	
THE SUN AND THE WIND (THE SUN SHOWS HIS POWER)	69
Photograph taken at New Haven, Connecticut	
THE FIRST COUNCIL OF HENRY V	79
SCHOOL GARDEN—THE FLOWER GARDENS	89