

Improvisation and Playbuilding (Primary)


eClass 2 - Playbuilding


1. Introduction and Overview


1.1 Start Lesson

Time required - 20 minutes

This eClass is part of the *Drama – Improvisation and Playbuilding (Primary)* series.

 **Education**
Public Schools






Improvisation and Playbuilding (Primary)

2. Playbuilding

Start Lesson



Time required - 20 minutes

1.2 Navigating Virtual Learning Content

- When using a smart phone or tablet, this eClass is best viewed in landscape mode.
- Always use the prev and next buttons to move through the eClass, except on question pages.
- When you answer a question correctly you will be prompted to click on the continue button.
- You must select correct answers to move forward and progress through the eClass.
- On some Virtual Learning content, the prev and next buttons may be temporarily disabled on video slides for the duration of the footage.
- You can use the Menu to gain quick access to particular slides and video.
- To complete the eClass you must progress through it slide by slide, watch all video footage and answer all questions correctly.
- Resources to accompany this eClass are found in the Resources link in the player, with the Menu.
- VIDEOS: for instructions on how to activate closed captions or access interactive transcripts, select the 'i' icon that appears on this slide and all video slides.

1.3 Introduction

Welcome to *Improvisation and Playbuilding (Primary) - Playbuilding*. This eClass for teaching Drama in Primary School is aimed primarily at stage 3 teachers.

Objectives:

- ✓ By the end of this eClass you will understand:
- ✓ What sort of stimulus materials to use and how to use them for playbuilding.
- ✓ A basic structure for a short performance piece based on a stimulus material.
- ✓ Some performance elements that are important to critique.

1.4 Overview

In this eClass you'll discover how to use images, text, ideas and stories as a starting point to devise original pieces of theatre in collaboration with others. Learn how to create group works that have a beginning, middle and end and deliver a clear social message or themes to an audience. Starting with improvisation, ideas and scenes are refined to produce a complete piece of theatre.

This workshop is good for beginners as well as those who want to extend their skills in devising and creating theatre.

1.5 David Todd

David Todd is a primary school teacher who has worked for 16 years across the NSW Department of Education and the Northern Territory Department of Education.

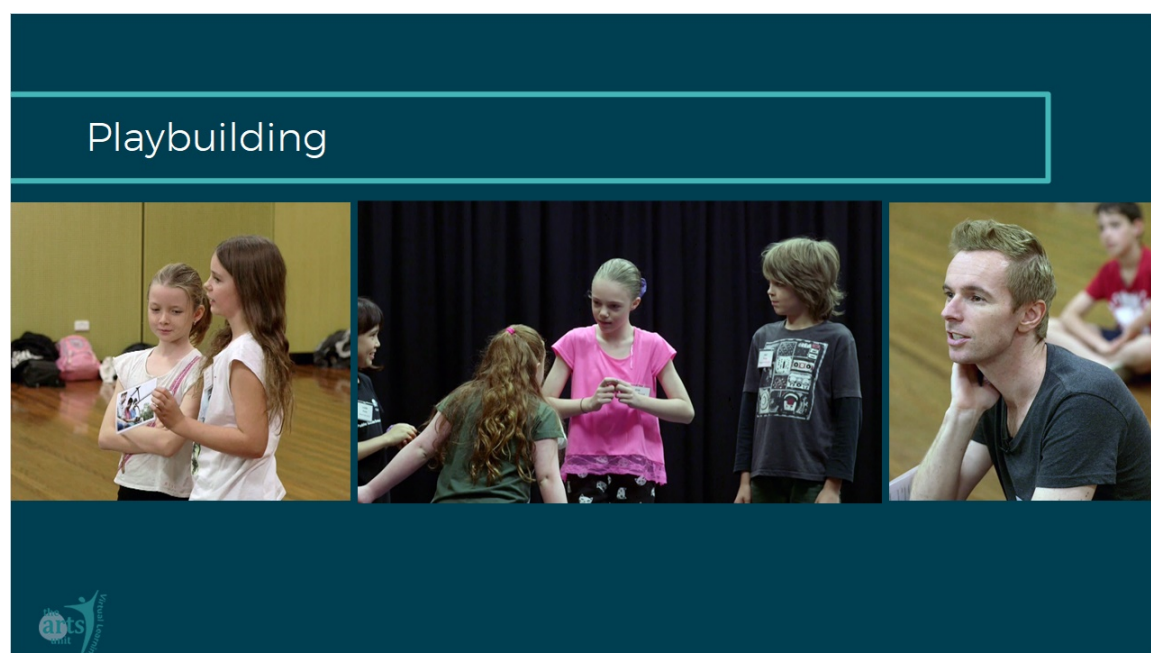
David's current role is as the Digital Content Producer at The Arts Unit which was a secondment from his substantive role as Assistant Principal at Vaucluse Public School. In his role at The Arts Unit he produces videos and live streams for Virtual Learning.

David's classroom teaching has a strong emphasis on drama and film and at the number of schools he has worked at he has been a strong advocate for the arts: directing whole school musicals, plays, drama ensembles and establishing film festivals.

Beyond the classroom David has performed on stage, TV and film. He has worked on NSW Department of Education events such as Create East, State Drama Festival, Sydney Region Drama Festival, Primary Drama Camp and Primary Play Day as both a director and tutor.

2. Playbuilding

2.1 Playbuilding



2.2 Introduction

This eClass utilises the skills of experienced primary drama teacher David Todd, to teach students how to build their improvisational and play building skills through various activities. Incorporating video and progressive questioning to clarify pedagogy, this eClass supports teachers to understand both playbuilding skills and best practice in educational instruction.

2.3 Video 5 Playbuilding

Transcript

In this session, the students will be in their pairs and then pairing with another group. And will be given a sentence starter, to work on a short piece based on the central theme that we've negotiated together. And then their job will be to go off and rehearse that for 10 minutes and come up with a rough draft of what play-built piece they can create based on this stimulus and the sentence starter, based on the central theme. Then they'll present that to me and the other children. And we'll critique, so we'll come up with a few suggestions for a final draft. And the students will also have some input as audience members. And then there'll be a final presentation for the parents to watch.

What I would like you to do is, we're just going to have a very short presentation with your stimulus material. While this is happening, I want you to think about which pair you want your pair to join, because we're going to be in groups of four now. And it's going to be based on, not who your friend is, or who you think is cool, but based on their stimulus material. If their stimulus material is very similar to yours, it might work well. If it is very different to yours, it might work even better. Think about it, you might clash and it might be awesome. So have a think about

what their stimulus material is and if it works with yours, or if it doesn't work with yours, who you might like to be with.

Ours was, "whatever your 100% looks like, give it." And we were running around saying, give because we had--

Well, we went around shopping for--

Shopping for ingredients to make bread because--

We wanted to give it.

Yeah, we wanted to give it to the poor because you put 100% into baking bread, and then it said give it.

That's wonderful, I love it. Yes, up the back.

This was our stimulus. And we thought teenagers and just doing selfies and on their phones all the time. They wear makeup and just having sleep overs all the time.

It's an interesting one because that picture-- you know, 15 years ago there wasn't an equivalent of that. And that is now the reality for that age group. So I thought that was a really interesting one.

Ours was this picture of this guy and it says, "one does not simply take something off the internet." And we kind of took it as a little boy, he puts a picture on the internet. And it's easy for someone to easily just screenshot it or something, so it's always going to be there. So you can't simply take it off. And then the teacher, or whoever the other person is, [INAUDIBLE].

Great.

We have this shot of a classroom with a teacher.

We would like a really strict principal to be walking around saying, behave.

That was your verb, great. OK, excellent. And what was the background? You were just a strict principal.

We were just like strict principals and we were telling this one child-- because in the photo, they were putting a hand up except for one child. And so we were just like saying, behave.

Wow, isn't that interesting. I interpreted that as collaborative learning and everyone's enthusiastically going like this. And you took it as strict principal, and boys not listening. Great, I love it. Wonderful, thank you.

Making plays, playbuilding is to tell a new story. And it can be based on things that we know about and are part of what we do and what we know about. But we're interpreting them in a different way and making a new story about it. So that's what playbuilding is. Of course, we could just pick up Beauty and the Beast and do a production of that. And it would be lovely and we'd enjoy it. But would we get anything new out of it? Not really. We might learn some skills about how to sing and how to dance, but we're not going to tell anything new as far as storytelling goes. And that's why playbuilding is such an essential form of drama. And that's why we're exploring that in this workshop today. Because then we can tell those stories, and maybe teach people things about certain issues. Because a lot of these are issues based. You probably noticed, there's environmental themes, there's race themes, we had the boat over there, the refugees. There was all sorts of different themes in there. If we can tell a story that's entertaining, but also-- this is a saying

that you might hear sometimes, holds a mirror up to society. Have you heard that one before?

It's like, "society, look at what you're doing?" And then we're performing something based on that.

Can I ask you now? You've got 30 seconds to do this, get into your fours based on who you think. I'm going to give you 30 seconds.

So you're going to be in your groups of four. Each group is going to be giving a card with a sentence on it, which is an incomplete sentence. And basically it's going to be the first line of your little play, OK? You've got a number on them, so that's the order in which you'll be presenting them to me.

For example, here's a very simple sentence starter, "once upon a time." That would be what you start with. That's the first sentence in your piece, OK? Now your piece will be based on all the ideas that you were giving me before lunch. The idea that you've got two different cards. You might not necessarily match in some way. If your card doesn't work for the piece, then maybe, say there's two cards in a group, you might say, "look, we're just going to go with this card. We think this cards probably a bit better. It suits what we want to do more, we're just going to go more with that stimulus."

OK, so I'm going to give you these. We are then going to spend probably about 10 very focused minutes in your groups of four. And then I'm going to bring you to the stage in the order of the sentences. We're all going to watch the piece. I'm going to watch it and then we're going to offer some feedback to each performer after you've done your-- I guess it's like a rehearsal. But it's a bit different to that because you're actually building a play. So it's a bit like you're making it up. We're having a look. This is great, this is great, maybe you could change this. Then you'll go back and work on it again for five minutes. And then we'll get you back on the stage again and we'll put it in an order.

2.4 Question 1 Reorder Elements

(Drag and Drop, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Drag and drop the elements on the left into the correct order on the right.

How has David Todd structured this workshop?
Students rehearse a draft of their piece.
Groups present 1st draft to teacher/students.
Teacher/students provide feedback.
Teacher allocates sentence starters.
Groups rehearse with new suggestions.
Students form groups of four.
Students perform amended playbuilt piece.

2.5 Question 2

(Multiple Response, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Choose the answers that best complete the statement.

What are characteristics the students are looking for to form their playbuilding groups? Select the two that apply.

A pair that have a similar/complementary stimulus to their pair.

A pair of students they get on well with and know from their school.

A pair of students who are cool that they like.

A pair that have a different/conflicting stimulus to their pair.

2.6 Question 3

(Multiple Response, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Choose the answers that best complete the statement.

What did the stimulus 'Whatever your 100% looks like give it' inspire from the pair who worked on it? Select the two that apply.

Social justice perspective, helping those who are needy.

The pair turned into a sporting analogy.

Pride in your work – baking the best bread they could so people can enjoy their product.

The saying was interpreted as perfection is the only acceptable outcome.

2.7 Question 4

(Multiple Response, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Choose the answers that best complete the statement.

The stimulus 'One does not simply take something off the internet' inspired the pair of students to think about... Select the two that apply.

seeing this concept from a digital native child's perspective (a boy) then telling his story.

the pair challenged this idea by stating that they are in total control of the images they put online and who sees them.

the permanency of images and text on the web: "it's easy for someone to screenshot it."

All of the above.

2.8 Question 5

(Multiple Response, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Choose the answers that best complete the statement.

Play building is about... Select the three that apply.
creating an engaging and entertaining piece of theatre that is memorable so that your message is remembered.
telling a new story from your / a character's perspective.
teaching/creating awareness about current or historical issues through storytelling.
performing completed, previously performed scripts such as an established musical.

2.9 Question 6

(Multiple Choice, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Choose the answer that best finishes the sentence.

Why is the sentence starter used?
To give the students a starting point for their playbuilt scene.
To assist students with spelling while they write their scenes.
To ensure that the playbuilt scenes have dialogue and are not mimed.
To prevent plagiarism – like a signature item in a film festival – the use of a sentence starter proves it's an original work.

2.10 Video 6 Performance and Feedback

Transcript

DAVID: Bring it forward, please.

- Oh, gee. The lift isn't moving! We're stuck!

- It's, it's it's, not moving.

- Oh, no. Let's ring Sophie.

- Hey guys, stay calm.

GROUP: No Wi-Fi?

- It's only Wi-Fi.

- Only Wi-Fi.

GROUP: Yes, it's only Wi-Fi. Now let us pry the door open. One, two, three--

[SCREAMING]

- Well at least we're out.

- You broke our iPhone 6ses.

- Sorry.

- Let's just go.

- Let's go to the pond and feed the ducks.

- Yes, let's feed the ducks. Oh, here's the pond. Smash the loaf.

- Where is the extra loaf?

- I think it's over here.

- I need some. Let's break it.

- There you go.

GROUP: Whoa.

- It exploded.

- Well, at least the phones are safe. Come.

- We're very sorry we smashed your phones. We bought you new ones.

- Thank you.

- And we're-- sort of sorry about the bread incident.

- Oh, did you put explosives in the bread? I didn't see you.

[LAUGHTER]

- We're sorry.

- So sorry.

GROUP: Selfie.

DAVID: When you explained it to me, I got really confused. But when I watched it, there was no confusion. It was really, really, clear. Very funny, I love Ellacoco's line. I

was nearly going to say, "you should've said 'sorry about the exploding bread.'" But, maybe you shouldn't say that, because then she doesn't say, "Oh, were there explosives in it?" Maybe she still could.

The whole thing needs to be brought forward. Like it has to be done right at the front of the stage. That's my main criticism. I thought it was wonderful. Yes?

- It was really good. The only thing, was you had two scenes going at once. So you couldn't hear what they were saying about their phones.

- Yeah, they were supposed to be on the side. We were supposed to be quietly feeding the ducks. They weren't supposed to start until we actually sat down.

DAVID: Well that kind of split focus would be great. I would love to see that with the freeze frame.

- I remember a time, when I was the new kid.

- Now class, we have a new kid.

- I'm Tommy.

- You all have to be very nice to her.

- Oh we'll be nice to her all right.

NARRATOR: Later in the corridor.

- Who are you, the new kid? Tell me where you came from, so I can punch you back there.

- Yeah, go back to where you've come from.

- Get lost kid. You'll never fit in here.

NARRATOR: Later in the classroom.

- Now class, I would like you all to write a report on [INAUDIBLE].

NARRATOR: Lunch time.

- That's a nice looking sandwich you got there.

- Yeah. What else you got here, huh?

- This is good, by the way. Tell your mum she makes good sandwiches.

- Miss, they're not being very nice to me.

- Now, kids. Why can't you just all get along?

NARRATOR: One week later.

- So Jett, how are you enjoying detention?

- Very good.

DAVID: Probably my main point, is that you've got to be very careful with this subject. Because it's pretty serious actually, that we're bullying this person. And maybe skipping off at the end isn't the best resolution, because it's simplifying it a little bit.

- Yeah, we weren't really sure what to do.

DAVID: Yeah. I wouldn't keep that. I love the bit about the lunch, "Your mum makes really good lunches." That could be a place where you bond, because you love her

food. And then maybe then, you can actually build in some more resolution there about how she feels. And then you could talk about how you're understanding that, and how you're apologetic about that, or something.

And maybe you don't learn the lesson, Jett. I don't know. That's why he's in detention at the end. And you've all got to be louder. Sometimes it was just too quiet, and I couldn't hear you. What were you going to say?

- I really think the scenes should blend in to each other more. Because now they're just, in the hallway, at lunch-- And it doesn't really seem like--

DAVID: It's disjointed.

- Yeah.

DAVID: And it's slow as well. Those things have got to be speedy, really speedy. I get that time is changing, but make it smooth, like you were saying, make it much smoother.

- I just wanted to question-- with that line, I didn't think it was on race. I just thought it was the school.

GROUP: Yeah.

- Was it the school you were--

DAVID: Wow, I read more into that.

- So, you wanted her to go back to her school?

- Yeah.

DAVID: Do you want to specify school? Because I didn't get that.

- Because we thought race would be too serious.

DAVID: That's why I was already in that place when I was watching it. Go "but you should go back to the school you came from," maybe. Just to really make it clear.

- The bell, when they go back into class.

DAVID: Yeah, bell. Good idea.

2.11 Question 7

(Multiple Response, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Choose the answers that best complete the statement.

How did the first group incorporate their stimulus material into their piece? Select the two that apply.

The 100% stimulus group abandoned their idea in favour of the other pair's concept.

The group with the teenager smartphone stimulus decided on exploring the technology of elevators instead.

The group with the 100% stimulus continued their social justice and bread making idea by feeding the ducks.

The teenager smartphone group focused on the reliance on their phones and always having access to Wi-Fi.

2.12 Question 8

(Multiple Response, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Choose the answers that best complete the statement.

What constructive suggestions were made by the tutor and other students to the first group? Select the two that apply.

Having a mime or a tableau split focus scene which alternated between the two pairs.

The entire scene should have been set in the elevator.

The actors need to speak up and project their voices more effectively.

The whole scene needs to be physically brought forward.

2.13 Question 9

(Multiple Response, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Choose the answers that best complete the statement.

The theme of bullying is a sensitive issue. What did David Todd suggest to the group to convey the subject matter sensitively? Select the two that apply.

The theme of bullying is too provocative for primary school students to be performing and they should change their topic.

The resolution with the bully and victim skipping off hand in hand was too simplistic and should be fleshed out and treated more respectfully.

Have the bully examine their behaviour from the moment where the lunch was shared and build empathy from there.

Have both bullies reprimanded in a detention scene so they can learn their lesson.

2.14 Question 10

(Multiple Response, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Choose the answers that best complete the statement.

What technical stage directions did the students and tutor give the group? Select the three that apply.
Students need to project their voices more effectively
Scene transitions need to be faster and smoother for a more coherent flow.
The scene needed some props to delineate the difference between settings.
Use a bell sound effect to signal the movement of time/change of scene.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Conclusion



3.2 Resources

That concludes the *Playbuilding* eClass.

Downloadable resources and further information accompanying this eClass can be found via the Resources link near the menu.

For more information about The Arts Unit Drama Programs go to:
www.artsunit.nsw.edu.au/drama

For more information, visit [The Arts Unit Drama Programs](#) and [NESA Creative Arts K6 Syllabus](#).

The previous eClass was *Warm Ups and Activities*.

3.3 About Virtual Learning

The NSW Department of Education Arts Unit provides students and teachers with highly motivating and engaging opportunities that inspire their creative potential. The Arts Unit delivers programs throughout NSW in dance, drama, music, visual arts, debating, public speaking, reading, spelling and special events.

The Arts Unit's Virtual Learning Program provides online access to arts education and professional Learning, engaging over 200,000 students and teachers annually.

Virtual excursions, streamed events, extensive digital libraries and NESA approved eModules ensure learning is relevant, memorable and meaningful.

There are now thousands of teachers registered for virtual learning in the arts and this number increases daily, especially teachers from rural and remote areas.

Further Creative Arts and Literacy content from The Arts Unit Virtual Learning can be found here:

- [The Arts Unit Learning Hub](#) (for identified PL)
- [The NSW Department of Education MyPL](#) (for accredited PL)

Sign up to Virtual Learning by registering on the [Learning Hub](#) or [email the Arts Unit Virtual Learning](#)

3.4 Types of Content

The Arts Unit Virtual Learning content ranges from:

- **eModule:** Professional learning courses designed for teachers as an interactive experience where you can learn at your own pace.
- **eClass:** Learn and extend your skill base for teaching in the classroom.
- **eClip:** Interviews with experts, mini docs, exemplars of best practice, useful tips and tricks.
- **eResource:** Multidimensional resources which can be utilised to create units of work.

So register on The Arts Unit's Learning Hub to browse and enjoy the quality virtual learning content. You will be notified through the Hub as new NESA approved, registered courses are available on MyPL.

3.5 Credits

Produced by The Arts Unit Virtual Learning.

<i>Subject Coordinator:</i>	Jane Simmons
<i>Tutor and Subject</i>	<i>Writer:</i> David Todd
<i>Project Coordinator:</i>	Carolyn Hammer
<i>Camera:</i>	Eric MacDonald
<i>Video Editor:</i>	David Todd
<i>Module Builder:</i>	Jhuny Boy Borja

3.6 Contacts

For further information contact The Arts Unit on: theartsunit@det.nsw.edu.au

Enquiries relating to the NSW Public Schools Drama Ensembles should be directed to: **Jane Simmons** - Student Drama Officer, The Arts Unit

Tel: 02 8512 1175

Email: drama.artsunit@det.nsw.edu.au

eLearning resource contact:

Carolyn Hammer - Virtual Learning Strategies Officer, The Arts Unit

Tel: 02 8512 1100 or 0414 636 909

Email: virtual.learning.theartsunit@det.nsw.edu.au

3.7 Congratulations

You have successfully completed this eClass.

Make sure you close this browser window and return to your MyPL Learning page. Refresh your browser to have this recorded and added to your learning log.

Produced by The Arts Unit Virtual Learning

© State of New South Wales (Department of Education), 2017.

4. Lightbox Slides

4.1 Readability Features

Closed Caption

All videos published by The Arts Unit's Virtual Learning Program are embedded with closed captions that can be shown or hidden via the Closed Caption logo.

Cannot see the logo? It will be visible in the bottom right of the video when you hover your mouse over the video. Click on the logo to choose between seeing the closed caption in English or hiding them (select "none").

Interactive Transcript

Videos can also be viewed with its transcript.

- **It scrolls as the video is playing**, displaying the part of the transcript that is currently being spoken. Currently spoken text in the transcript is highlighted and remains coloured.
- **Users can skip to any part of the video by clicking on the words in the transcript.** The video will automatically skip to the moment in the video when the selected word is being spoken.