

FUNNYBONES

1

KS1 OBJECTIVE

An interactive storytelling session to explore the plot and characters of *Funnybones* through a range of drama and movement activities

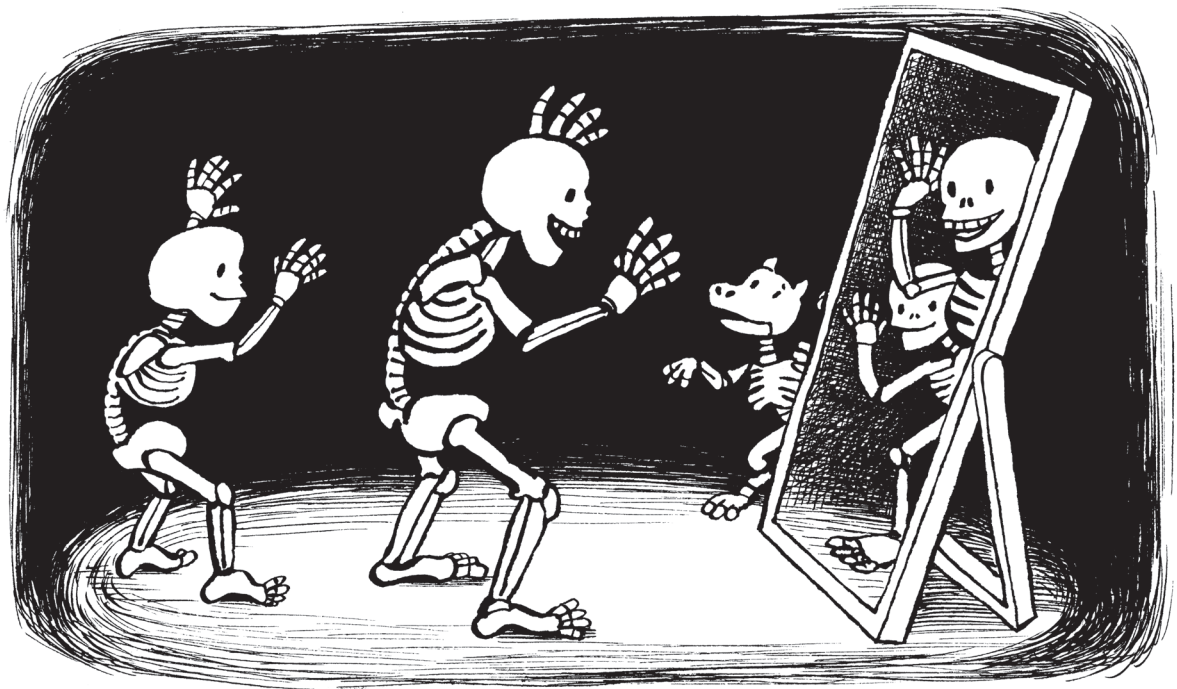
DURATION

45 minutes

RESOURCES

Ahlberg, J. and A. (1980). *Funnybones*. Walker Books. ISBN 978-0140565812

TIMING	CONTENT	RESOURCES
3 mins	<p>BEGIN THE STORY</p> <p>Introduce the story and tell the students they will do some drama activities to explore what happens. Explain that there are some parts which the children can join in with (e.g. the repeating text on the first page: <i>dark, dark...</i>)</p> <p>Read the opening of the book up to '<i>They went into the park</i>'</p>	' <i>Funnybones</i> ' book
10 mins	<p>SHOW ME</p> <p>Divide the class into groups of 4-5.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ask groups to make a <i>Ten Second Object</i> of the skeletons' house. They can also add spooky sounds! – Share some of the objects made by groups – Give groups another 60 seconds to make a <i>Freeze Frame</i> of what they think happens next in the park – Use <i>Thought Tracking</i> to find out what different characters in the freeze frame might be thinking or saying 	<p><i>Ten Second Objects</i> (p. 66)</p> <p><i>Freeze Frames</i> (p. 56)</p> <p><i>Thought Tracking</i> (p. 68)</p>
3 mins	<p>READING</p> <p>Read up to where the skeletons put the dog back together and they sing a song to celebrate: '<i>These bones, these bones can bark again...</i>'</p>	
10 mins	<p>MIXED-UP DOG DANCE</p> <p>Divide the class into groups of 4-5 and explain that the children will make their own versions of 'mixed-up dogs'. They should make two freeze frames:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – First, the dog bones scattered on the ground, with each student as a different bone – Second, the bones put back together in the wrong order <p>After a couple of minutes choose one group to show what they've done in the centre of the space. Begin with the 'bones' disconnected on the ground, then play some atmospheric music. They should move in slow-motion into the second freeze frame, showing the shape of the mixed-up dog. Remind them to listen to the music and move <i>slow-ly</i>.</p> <p>Invite another group to do the same activity in the centre, making a new mixed-up dog each time. Once you have established the technique you can show two or three groups at the same time while the music plays.</p>	<p>Music e.g.</p> <p>'<i>Ghost Town</i>' (<i>The Specials</i>)</p> <p>'<i>Alladin Dub</i>' (<i>The Spy from Cairo</i>)</p> <p>'<i>Carnival of the Animals: Fossiles</i>' (<i>Saint-Saëns</i>)</p> <p>'<i>Nyakinyua Rise</i>' (<i>Jiin</i>)</p>
3 mins	<p>READING</p> <p>Read up to the page that ends '<i>and the dog skeleton frightened them.</i>'</p>	



<p>10 mins</p>	<p>MIRROR GAME</p> <p>Explain that the skeletons are going to practise being scary by standing in front of a mirror. Demonstrate the <i>Mirror Game</i> with two students.</p> <p>The pair should stand facing each other a short distance apart with an imaginary mirror in between. A is the skeleton and B is the reflection. A starts moving slowly, smoothly and scarily while B tries to reflect A's movements as accurately as possible. When they have got the hang of this, give a signal (clap your hands/play a bell) for the players to swap so that A is now the leader.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Divide the class into pairs and ask them to label themselves A and B - Play the game, emphasising slow movements - Swap leadership a few times - Give a theme such as morning exercises, getting dressed or singing a song - Ask a pair to show what they were doing - Give the signal to swap a few times then stop the activity and ask students to guess who is leading at that moment - Repeat with more pairs <p>Teaching Tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Play some spooky music to help create the atmosphere - When students swap over leadership they should make the change as smoothly as possible so that it is hard for others to guess who is leading! 	<p>Bell or Tambourine</p> <p>Slow or spooky music e.g. 'Nocturne in E-flat Major, Op 9' (Chopin)</p> <p>'Twice Variation' (Einaudi)</p> <p>'Danse Macabre' (Saint Saëns)</p>
<p>1 min</p>	<p>READING</p> <p>Read the story to the very end: 'They still do'. The children can join in with 'dark, dark' once again.</p>	
<p>3 mins</p>	<p>PLENARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What was your favourite part of the story? - What did you enjoy most about the drama lesson today? - Is it easy to make freeze frames? - Did you enjoy working with a partner in the mirror game? - Did you know that there are lots more <i>Funnybones</i> stories? 	

FUNNYBONES

2

KS1 OBJECTIVE

Use a variety of drama games and strategies to further explore the story of *Funnybones*

DURATION

35-40 minutes

RESOURCES

Ahlberg, J. and A. (1980). *Funnybones*. Walker Books. ISBN 978-0140565812

TIMING	CONTENT	RESOURCES
10 mins	<p>SOUNDSCAPE</p> <p>This activity can be done sitting on the floor or at desks. Remind the children of the story and ask them what they remember about the skeletons' house. What kind of sounds might they hear inside the house? Ask for suggestions, including names of sounds as well as vocal examples.</p> <p>These could include the staircase, creaking doors, the skeletons moving around, skeletons scaring each other, the dog barking, laughter, strange snoring...</p> <p>Explain that you are going to create a 'soundscape' or sound picture of the haunted house. As well as vocalising creepy sounds, ask the children to think of words from the story which they can speak in a spooky way (such as 'dark, dark'). Divide the class into sections, giving a particular sound for each section.</p> <p>When everybody is ready, the teacher conducts the sounds by raising her hand to increase the volume or bringing it down for silence. Discuss how effective the soundscape was and how it could be improved. You may wish to record the result.</p>	<p><i>Optional:</i> <i>Recording device</i></p> <p><i>Soundscapes</i> (p. 61)</p>
10 mins	<p>A VISIT TO THE ZOO</p> <p>In the story the skeletons meet the skeleton animals in the zoo. Show pictures from the book to remind the children of the animals. Divide them into groups of about five to make <i>Ten Second Objects</i> of some of the animals. Can any groups actually move around as the animal? If there is time, groups can make a different animal of their own choice for others to guess.</p>	<p><i>Ten Second Objects</i> (p. 66)</p>
	<p>WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?</p> <p>Explain that the class are going to make up a new adventure for the skeletons, for example, what happened the next night, or what could happen if the skeletons went out during the day.</p> <p>Choose one of the following ways to extend and innovate the story:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Imaginarium can be done by the <i>whole class</i> in a circle - Freeze frames are made in <i>smaller groups</i> <p>(Group work is generally more suitable for older students.)</p>	
15 mins	<p>IMAGINARIUM (Whole Class)</p> <p>The players sit or stand in a circle. One person steps forward and makes a freeze frame of an object or character that could appear in the new story. As well as making the shape, the player should announce what she is, for example, 'I am a lamppost' or 'I am the skeleton dog'.</p>	<p><i>Imaginarium</i> (p. 58)</p>

	<p><i>Imaginarium (continued)</i></p> <p>Other players add themselves into the scene by making objects or characters related to ones that are already there. Everyone continues to hold their positions. The game ends when all players have stepped in or when enough ideas have been added. At this point the teacher says 'Whoosh!' and the players step back to the edge of the circle.</p> <p>It is important that players watch and listen carefully so that they add in an appropriate character or object. Only one idea at a time should be added so that everyone can see and hear what is being included. Players should think about how their characters and objects relate to each other, how they can make interesting shapes and how they can use different levels (high, medium or low). At the end you can ask students to improvise a short version of the story that has been created.</p> <p>You can of course play the game more than once to try out ideas for different adventures.</p> <p>Teaching Tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Two or more players can step in at the same time to make an object together – The teacher can say 'Action!' and everyone brings the scene alive for a few moments through improvised sounds and actions – Use <i>Thought Tracking</i> to find out what characters/objects are thinking – Ask players to add an adjective e.g. 'I am a shaky skeleton' – Ask players to speak a sentence describing what their character or object is doing 	<p><i>Action Clip</i> (p. 54)</p> <p><i>Thought Tracking</i> (p. 68)</p>
<p>15 mins</p>	<p>FREEZE FRAMES (Groups)</p> <p>This is an alternative way to devise new adventures. Divide the class into groups of 4-5. They should discuss and improvise their story before showing it to the rest of the class. They can use narration including key phrases such as 'On a dark, dark hill'.</p>	<p><i>Freeze Frames</i> (p. 56)</p>
	<p>EXTENSION ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Draw a new adventure of the skeleton family – Add speech balloons like the ones in the book – Compose your own songs, raps and rhymes like the ones in the story – Play warm up games like Grandmother's Footsteps and Keeper of the Keys to explore dramatic tension 	

SCAREDY CATS

Discuss the different ways that the skeletons tried to frighten each other in the story.

In threes, children take the roles of the two skeletons and the dog and have to act out different ways of scaring one other. Can they act as though they are not expecting anything before they are surprised? Which group can make up the funniest idea?

EXTRACT FROM:

Drop Of A Hat: Drama Lessons, Games And Activities

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I do hope you enjoyed this drama unit! You can find many more lesson plans and resources at: <https://dramaresource.com/downloads>

If you want to learn more about the drama strategies used in this mini-download you may be interested in our award-nominated online course **The Inspiring Drama Teacher**.

The course includes live sessions, videos, downloads and lesson plans. It also gives you the opportunity to share ideas with like-minded people and receive guidance from me along the way! To find out more about this incredibly popular course (and get a free download of A Midsummer Night's Dream Storytelling Whoosh) please visit:

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Thanks, David Farmer.

Disclaimer: The drama activities, exercises and techniques are undertaken entirely at your own risk and the author accepts no responsibility for any accident or injury sustained while using this lesson plan.

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Drop Of A Hat: Drama Lessons, Games And Activities

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FURTHER READING

Other books by David Farmer

101 DRAMA GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

This best-selling book (over 20,000 copies) was developed during a wide-ranging career in education and theatre, through workshops with actors, teachers and children around the world. The pages are packed with tried and tested ideas for a whole range of activities useful for drama lessons, workshops or rehearsals. Sections include improvisation, mime, ice-breakers, group dynamics, rehearsal, story-telling, voice and warm-ups.

"David Farmer's excellent book ...it is here that you will more than likely find an activity that will suit your needs."

- Journal of National Drama

101 MORE DRAMA GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

This sequel to the classic '101 Drama Games and Activities' contains inspirational games and exercises to use in drama lessons and workshops as well as during rehearsal and devising periods. There are activities to develop concentration, mime, movement and team building plus dozens of ideas for developing improvisation and exploring storytelling skills.

"...bubbles over with imaginative ideas which could be used to good effect by non-specialist as well as seasoned drama teachers. Excellent resource for primary, secondary and other drama teachers."

- Teaching Drama Magazine.

LEARNING THROUGH DRAMA IN THE PRIMARY YEARS

The book provides guidance to teachers who have never taught drama before but are considering using it in a subject area such as science or history and offers new approaches to those familiar with common drama techniques. The book includes 36 drama strategies and over 250 cross-curricular activities, including practical ideas for inspiring speaking, listening and writing.

'Even the well-practiced and creative drama teacher will find something in this book that serves as a refresher, reminder or quite simply a new idea... a must-have publication for those serious about the teaching of drama in primary school settings.'

- Teaching Drama magazine.

PLAYFUL PLAYS: VOLUME ONE

This lively collection of eight short plays for children and young people is supported by inspirational drama games designed to bring creativity and fun to the rehearsal room. The stories are based on traditional folk-tales from countries including China, Ghana, Greece, Japan, Turkey and Scandinavia. The plays feature performance techniques such as mime, mask, freeze frames, audience participation, live music and song.

"It offers teachers an off-the-shelf, ready-to-go, high-quality rehearsal process ideal for primary-aged students... The book is very well laid out and user-friendly, and is the perfect go-to for short presentation pieces that pack a punch."

- Teaching Drama Magazine.