

"A DRAMA IN EDUCATION"

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This workshop is based upon the work of the innovative British educator Dorothy Heathcote (*Wagner 1979, Heathcote and Bolton 1995*). The teaching/learning strategy is known as "The Mantle of the Expert", and has been developed by the workshop leaders to explore a content area appropriate to the theme of this conference, sustainability. Unlike some drama workshops which often rely heavily on a game-based approach of the use of simulations, this technique is characterised by its inversion of the classic teacher/learner relationship.

In this approach, the teacher, in role, is the person who needs the assistance of the experts, the students in role. This powerful dynamic, simple as it may seem, should not be underestimated. It is our experience that people of all ages tend to respond well to the notion that they have something to offer when they are genuinely striving to work out what can and should be done. "This problematisation" has obvious connections with the world of environmental education, where value judgements are constantly being questioned, possible alternative solutions explored and ultimately action taken. Through working in a fictional, but realistic context, the real world can be brought into the classroom and criteria such as reasonableness, appropriateness and viability can be applied within the framework of an active drama experience.

In addition to the opportunity to familiarise themselves with this technique through active involvement, workshop participants are provided with some of the theory which underpins the approach.

REFERENCES

1. Wagner, B J (1979) Dorothy Heathcote. Drama as a learning medium, Hutchinson Education.
2. Heathcote, D and Bolton G, (1995) Drama for learning, Heinemann.