

Process Drama: Teacher-in-Role

by Rosalind Flynn

5 Change the nature of your interactions with students by playing a role—a villain or a celebrity even—and you may just increase their engagement in lessons dramatically!

Teacher-in-Role is a Process Drama strategy.

Process Drama is a method of teaching and learning in which both the students and teacher work in role and participate in an imagined dramatic situation.

Both of the words “process” and “drama” are critical to its name:

10 **Process DRAMA**

It is not “theatre”—a performance practiced to present for an audience.

It is “drama”—the immediate experience of dealing with tension, conflict, searching for solutions, planning, persuading, refuting, advising, and defending, etc.

15 **PROCESS Drama**

It is not about creating a “product”—a play or a performance.

It is about agreeing to play a role and go through a “process” of thinking and responding in that role.

20 **Process drama is unscripted.** Teachers and students usually research, plan, and prepare in advance of the drama, but the drama itself is improvised. Improvisation practice and skills, therefore, are helpful for Process Drama work.

There are many drama strategies that fall under the larger term “Process Drama.”

TEACHER-IN-ROLE

25 **The teacher plays a role in the drama.** Along with the students in role, the teacher plays role. This role does not require a costume or a Tony Award-winning performance.

By simply adopting the attitude of the character he or she plays and making even just small vocal changes, the teacher is in role.

30 **The value of the teacher’s role.** Being in role allows the teacher to keep the drama going by questioning, challenging, organizing thoughts, involving students, and managing difficulties. In role, the teacher can protect the drama

from failure, encourage greater language use, point out consequences, summarize ideas, and engage the students in the dramatic action.

5 **The teacher can stop and re-start the drama.** Because Process Drama is not theatre, teachers and students need to know that the drama can stop and re-start as often as necessary. Often there is a need to stop and clarify or correct something or to question or research information. Taking a “**time out**” to attend to such things is fine.