

Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde: Drama Workshop 3 – Narration and Storytelling

Exploring the use of narration and storytelling in Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde

Activity 1

- ➡ Divide participants into groups of 4 or 5. Use the following extract from the original novel of Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde for the activity:

Nearly a year later, in the month of October 18--, London was startled by a crime of singular ferocity, and rendered all the more notable by the high position of the victim. The details were few and startling. A maid-servant living alone in a house not far from the river had gone upstairs to bed about eleven. Although a fog rolled over the city in the small hours, the early part of the night was cloudless, and the lane, which the maid's window overlooked, was brilliantly lit by the full moon... She became aware of an aged and beautiful gentleman with white hair drawing near along the lane; and advancing to meet him, another and very small gentleman, to whom at first she paid less attention... When they had come within speech (which was just under the maid's eyes) the older man bowed and accosted the other with a very pretty manner of politeness... Presently her eye wandered to the other... all of a sudden he broke out in a great flame of anger, stamping with his foot, brandishing the cane, and carrying on (as the maid described it) like a madman.

- ➡ Using the extract as a starting point, create a performance using a narrator who is not part of the scene. You should:
 - Think about what the narrator will need to say in order that the audience understand what is happening.
 - Decide what the other performers will do - will they move, or could you use tableaux?
- ➡ Using the extract as a starting point, create a performance which uses **more than one** narrator. You could:
 - Have each character narrate their part in the scene.
 - Consider adding in extra character(s) who are “hearing” the story.
 - Retain a “main” narrator but add extra narrators as new characters arrive.

Drama Workshop 3 – Narration and Storytelling (continued)

Activity 2

- ➡ Divide participants into groups of 5 or 6. Use the following extract from Act 2 Scene 11 of the play. Ask groups to share the roles (Enfield, Maid, Utterson, Old Man, Younger Man) out and to read it through first.

London in winter. The same night. Above, a MAID in a nightshirt with a rug around her shoulders stands looking out of a high window. ENFIELD and UTTERSON appear.

- ENFIELD** While in the early months of winter, London was startled by a crime of singular ferocity.
- MAID** So, sir, it went this way.
- UTTERSON** Rendered all the more notable by the high position of the victim.
- MAID** I was in my room, and I was standing on my box, and looking at the stars...
- ENFIELD** The details,
- UTTERSON** Which were few,
- ENFIELD** Came from the evidence of a maid-servant,
- MAID** ...as I likes to do of a clear night and I can't get up there 'less I stands on something 'cos the window's awful high.
- UTTERSON** whose attic window overlooked the river,
- MAID** And at first I don't' see nothing but the stars, and all I hear's the lapping of the river...
- ENFIELD:** Lit brilliantly by the full moon.

ENFIELD and UTTERSON withdraw

- MAID** And I'll be straight, sir. I hardly ever feels more kindly or at peace with things, as how the stars and moons and that are s'posed to make you feel. And then I hears the tap tap of a footfall and there's an old man with white hair and stick. And then I hears a second tapping and I has to stand on tip-toe, so as I can see the other one.

Drama Workshop 3 – Narration and Storytelling (continued)

- ➡ Stage the extract. Consider:
 - Where the Maid will be in relation to the others.
 - Where Utterson and Enfield will be in relation to the others.
 - Who each character is speaking to.
 - When and how the Old Man and the Younger Man enter, and what they do next.
 - What your 6th person will do (if you have one) Could they be an extra character? Or would it help to have a director?
- ➡ Using what you know about what comes next, from the extract from the novel, continue with the scene. Consider:
 - How far the Maid will continue to narrate.
 - What the two men will say to each other and what they will do.
 - Whether Utterson and Enfield will return to the scene.
 - What your 6th person (if you have one) will do.
 - How you can continue with the narration and storytelling, in the same style as the opening of the scene, in order to ensure that your audience fully understands what is happening.