

# **UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION [UNESCO]**

## **Arts Education in Latin America and the Caribbean.**

### **Conference Paper**

#### **The Teaching of Theatre Arts in Jamaican / Caribbean Schools.**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Theatre Arts in Education**

Serious studies in Theatre Arts combine affective and cognitive modes of learning, resulting in the development and refinement of creativity and critical thinking skills. For this reason, Theatre Arts should be regarded as an essential part of the schools' curriculum. Theatre arts has the power to transform education; to communicate to pupils/students in a language that demonstrates concepts, reveals symbols and forges connections with all aspects of their lives. Theatre Arts promotes interdisciplinary learning, multicultural understanding and develop problem-solving skills. The eclectic nature of Theatre Arts provides the framework for developing pupils'/students' in various areas of the arts. Experiences in Theatre Arts provide opportunities for participants to learn about themselves and their identity.

Theatre Arts is often used in schools throughout the Caribbean, mainly for the transmission and exploration of cultural heritage. When children explore their folk forms through Theatre Arts they learn to celebrate their roots and to find their in place history. Theatre Arts has been an essential part of our culture throughout history. Our oral tradition of story telling, folk songs, traditional dances, carnival, dramatic rituals and revelries of our ancestors are all part of our artistic tradition that must be taught to our children. Each aspect of Theatre Arts has its own body of content and history, its processes, modalities of expression, aesthetic criteria and language.

Every child has the innate ability and capacity to be artistically expressive. It is therefore the responsibility of schools, to provide children with Theatre Arts programmes that will ensure that they can develop to their full potential. As Caribbean educators and artistes, it is our responsibility to ensure that, Theatre Arts is treated as more than an adornment of our culture; but as the basis for our society. We must begin to treat Theatre Arts as metaphors for the way Caribbean people live, our values, beliefs and aspirations. We can only begin to do this when Theatre Arts is placed at centre of our schools' curricula.

## **Theatre Arts in Jamaican/Caribbean Schools.**

Drama and Dance are two components of Theatre Arts that are being taught in some schools throughout the Caribbean. The teaching of Drama and Dance in schools began to develop within a formal framework in Jamaica and the region, in 1976 with the opening of the Cultural Training Centre, now the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts. As the only tertiary arts institution of its kind in the English speaking Caribbean its mandate was to train teachers of the arts, visual and performing artists and cultural agents. This training has undoubtedly influenced the teaching of Theatre Arts in Caribbean schools and in Jamaica in particular. Several traditional high schools began to employ full time Drama teachers and Dance teachers, to a lesser degree; most of whom are employed on a part time basis.

In 1983 a UNESCO team recommended a restructuring and rationalization of secondary education in Jamaica. This recommendation centred on the provision of a common core curriculum for all students at the lower secondary level. Through the Reform of Secondary Education [**ROSE**] a bold step was made to unify lower secondary education, as well as to move the arts from the periphery of the curriculum.

### **DANCE**

The Dance curriculum was developed as a component of the physical education curriculum for grades seven to nine. At the grade seven level, movement education and gymnastics provide the foundation for the various elements of dance to be taught at grades eight and nine. The principle underlying the dance curriculum is that:

“ to move to rhythm, to dance, is a natural human reaction. Children enjoy movement for its own sake and the substance of dance is movement. Persons need the aesthetics for expression and cultural identity and this provides a strong rationale for the inclusion of Dance in the curriculum. In education, Dance is both an enjoyable experiential process and a self actualizing product. It affects body, mind and emotions. The Dance curriculum encourages each student to communicate and express his/her own ideas and feelings in a creative way.

Physical skills, body control, self- discipline and social interaction are all part of the growth and change promoted through the Dance curriculum. The curriculum is intended to make each student aware of his/her individuality through the assessment of needs and recognition of abilities. Through task and problem-solving, the dance process is intended to provide opportunities for cognitive learning, and divergent thinking.

The aims of the grades seven to nine Dance curriculum are to:

- use traditional dances to link historical and social conditions
- define the local culture and national identity
- increase students understanding of self, culture and identity.

By the end of grade nine students should be able to:

- perform expressive dance sequences using numerous types of stimuli with increased creativity and form
- demonstrate through a variety of activities, the elements of movement for expression and communication through dance
- create and perform dance in a range of styles, form and content.

The curriculum should be taught in all secondary schools. In reality the Dance component of the Physical Education curriculum is being taught in only a few schools. There are a number of factors affecting the teaching of Dance within the formal framework. Some of these are:

- teacher / student ratio prohibits a number of schools from employing full time Dance teacher
- not all Physical Education teachers are trained to teach Dance.
- proper classroom facilities do not exist in most schools for the teaching of dance
- some school administration perceive and support Dance as extra curricular activity for the festival competition.

## **DRAMA**

The national Drama curriculum was developed in 1994 for grades seven to nine students in all secondary schools in Jamaica. The curriculum covers three areas:

- Technique
- Imagination
- Appreciation

The grade seven level is regarded as the exploration year; grade eight the developmental year and grade nine, the interpretation year. The curriculum recognises drama as a subject in its own right and as an educational method having a valuable contribution to make to other areas of the curriculum.

At the end of the three years, students should:

- recognize drama as an art form that requires a seriousness of approach
- be able to create, develop and participate in improvised scenes
- have acquired the ability to identify with characters and action through roleplay.

- be able to identify good works in theatre through detailed and critical observation of characters created, issues involved and processes employed
- acquire the skills necessary for performing in theatrical productions.

The curriculum emphasizes the drama process and it is not until at the grade nine level that theatre and theatrical production/performances are encouraged. The teaching style emphasizes some sixty-five, drama conventions that are utilized in the teaching of classroom drama.

All secondary schools are expected to teach the national Drama curriculum from grades seven to nine. A significant number of schools are teaching drama. In some of these schools however, drama is only taught to grades seven and eight. A major factor in a number of the schools teaching Drama is that one teacher is unable to teach the number of sessions. Only a few schools have two drama teachers. Most of the issues affecting the full implementation, of the curriculum are similar to those of Dance. During the pilot stage twenty schools were given some materials and equipment to set up a proper drama classroom. Five new secondary schools were opened in September 2001. They are all equipped with performing arts studio.

September 2001 marked a milestone in the teaching of Theatre Arts to grades ten and eleven students in schools in the Caribbean. In 1995 a proposal, was submitted by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Jamaica to the Caribbean Examination Council [CXC] for Theatre Arts to be considered as one of their examination subjects. After a series of feasibility studies throughout the regions, the proposal was accepted. A panel representing theatre artistes and educators from Barbados, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad & Tobago drafted the Theatre Arts syllabus.

The rationale for Theatre Arts at the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate [CSEC] level, reads as follows:

“ Theatre Arts is at the centre of the cultural expression of Caribbean peoples. As a discipline, Theatre Arts tends to reflect life and contributes uniquely to the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional and aesthetic growth of an individual. Dance and Drama are two major components of theatre arts. The third component, stage craft links Dance and Drama by providing the craft and skills required for producing theatre. Through Theatre Arts we are able to express our deepest emotions, thus satisfying our innate urge to communicate. It is this urge to communicate that helps us to interact with the world. Theatre Arts provides an important means of understanding, constructing, appreciating and communicating social and cultural values, interpreting, valuing and transmitting the traditions of the past and exploring, celebrating and challenging the present and imagining the future.”

The aims of the syllabus are to:

- foster appreciation for the forms that Theatre Arts have assumed in various cultural contexts in the Caribbean
- develop an understanding of the nature, processes and logistics of Theatre
- enable an appreciation of Theatre by participating in making Theatre
- provide opportunity to experience Theatre through the mind, senses, voice, emotions and body
- nurture an understanding of Theatre by studying certain prescribed
- Caribbean texts, audio and video tapes
- enable evaluation of texts and books of Theatre through the written, oral and graphic media.

The content is drawn from Caribbean cultural forms across all the Caribbean Examination Council's participating regions and includes some forty nine cultural forms and artistic traditions. The territories of Anguilla, Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, are listed by the Caribbean Examination Council's secretariat as having started the preparation of students for the first examination to be held in 2003. The examination comprises:

- a core paper 01 written examination
- a practical examination involving: a theatrical performance in either dance or theatre or stagecrafts based on the option selected for paper 02
- School base assessment- SBA for paper 03

Thus the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate [CSEC] theatre arts will provide students within the regions with the opportunity to explore, appreciate and perform their artistic traditions.

Significant efforts has been made by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Jamaica to focus on placing the arts at the centre of the Primary school's curriculum. The Primary Education Improvement Project [PEIP11] funded by the government of Jamaica and the Inter-American Development Bank has made a significant difference in the quality of Primary education. The inclusion of all the arts brings the added dimension to the revised curriculum.

Drama is where all the arts meet, and as such is inclusive of music, movement, visual arts and literature. At grades one to three, the aesthetics is considered as the driving force for the integrated curriculum. The curriculum states that:

“The aesthetics have the power to substantially enhance the learning process because they are able to speak to children in a language they understand which demonstrates concepts, reveals symbols and forges connections. They constitute an alternative means of communication.”

At the grades four, five and six levels, drama is taught as a subject. The three

strands covered are:

- Creating
- Expressing
- Appreciating and evaluating

The content includes:

- Story drama
- Exploration of the senses for dramatic playing
- Inventive role-play
- Creative use of movements
- Establishing relationships within the drama
- Exploring cultural forms for dramatic work
- Exploring the voice for dramatic performance

Creative movement, which is a unit of the Drama curriculum, along with the creative movement component of the Physical Education curriculum provide the dance/movement elements of the Dance curriculum. The aims of the dance/creative movement component of the curriculum is that pupils should:

- show control of the body and mastery in composition using various elements of movement
- successfully demonstrate dance steps developed from ring games
- use creative movements for personal expression, to communicate, and for emotional release
- perform simple Caribbean folk dances

The Primary curriculum began its nation wide, phase implementation in September 2001, starting with grades one and four. By September 2004, all the in all Primary school will have started doing Dance and Drama.

### **Artistic Traditions in the Caribbean.**

Professor Rex Nettleford states that the arts is life and a nation that expresses itself through the arts will strengthen ten fold. As part of the heritage of any culture, Theatre Arts are forms of understanding that are fundamental to what it means to be aware of one's identity. Artistic traditions in Dance and Drama in Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean span centuries. The roots of our artistic traditions spring mainly from European, African and East Indian cultural traditions. The slave performances of rituals and folklore such as brukins party, Christmas masquerades, songs, chants, drumming and dancing and story telling gave rise to a Caribbean theatrical style.

The festival Cannes Brulles in Trinidad evolved into the now famous Carnival, Christmas Jonkunnu, became the trade-mark of Jamaica and the Bahamas. Queh Queh a per-marriage ritual of song and dance flourished in Guyana. The telling of Anancy stories and Duppy stories and Tea meetings became strong cultural theatre forms throughout the Caribbean. Religious, funerary and social dances provided the base for our rich dance heritage. African derived dance forms such as Kumina and Dinki Mini, European derived forms, Quadrille and Maypole as well as indigenous creolised forms, as Brukins and Revival are part of the rich Jamaican dance tradition

Since the early 1930's Caribbean playwrights, Choreographers, dance troupes and theatre companies have been trying to keep our artistic traditions alive. The National Dance Theatre Company, The Little Theatre Movement, The Whitehall Players, and Trinidad Theatre Workshop in Trinidad, the St Lucia Arts Guild, Stage One in Barbados and the Theatre Guild in Guyana are some of these groups. The Little Theatre Movement, established in 1941 has been for over fifty years producing annual national Pantomimes. The Pantomime performances are rooted in the Jamaican folklore and has now become the Jamaican theatre tradition. The National Dance Theatre Company was formed in 1962, emerging out of the 'roots and rhythms' independence show. The NDTC is the most professional, artistic and cohesive theatrical company yet to emerge out of Jamaica. The company's traditional dances portray the sophistication and artistic legacy of the Caribbean peoples and has become a symbol of theatrical excellence for Jamaica and the Caribbean.

Caribbean playwrights over the years have used cultural forms and rituals as the basis for their works. Plays such as Echo in the Bone by Dennis Scott, Shephard by Rawl Gibbons, Old Story Time by Trevor Rhone, Ti Jean and His Brothers by Dereck Wacott, The Master of Carnival by Amoroso Ronnie, Masquarade by Slyvia Wynter and Dance Bongo by Errol Hill are lasting testaments of our artistic traditions. These plays provide for our children a deeper and richer understanding of Caribbean folk traditions.

The Secondary Schools' Drama Festival has evolved into a fifty-two year old institution, providing a theatrical outlet for teachers and students as playwrights, directors, actors and actresses, stage managers, set and costume designers. The festival has in the last eight years become a regional festival with the best play from the each territory coming together to perform in a bi-annual regional festival. It is through this festival that most of our one act Caribbean plays are performed.

The Jamaica Cultural Development Commission, founded in 1963 has also for over thirty five years been keeping the Jamaican artistic tradition alive. The National Festival in Speech, Drama and Dance has exposed pupils and students from Primary and Secondary schools to their folk forms. Story telling is kept alive through the Speech festival. Rituals such as wakes are used in theatrical

productions. The traditional dance category of the dance festival has grown tremendously in both quality and quantity. Several of our Primary and Secondary schools have established vibrant traditional dance troupes and are regional and international ambassadors of our traditional dance forms. Preparation for these festivals are done as extra curricular activities and form part of the regular school activity.

Some attempts, have been made, by both Jamaica and Barbados, through Culture Agents in schools programmes to bring our artistic traditions to the fore of the formal curriculum. This along with the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate [CSEC] in theatre arts should place our artistic forms in a stronger position in the curricula of our schools. The forms to be studied over time at the grades ten and eleven level are: Bames, Bele, Bonu, Brukins, Buru, Camboulay, Carolling, Carnival, Cropover, Dinki Mini, Divali, Dirki Merki, Ettu, Fire Dancing, Hosay, Jonkunnu, Kumfa, Kumina, Katumba, La Maguerite, Land ship, Len hand, La Rose, Limbo, Mento, Moko Jumbie, Maypole, Masquarade, Nation Dance, Nyabingi, Orisha, Quadrille, Pantomime, Parang, Pukkumina, Phagwa, Queh Queh, Revival, Sewerel, Speech Bands, Stallan, Stick Fight, Story Telling, Strip, Tea Meeting, Tuck Pan, Wakes/ nine night/ setup/ forty night, and Zella.

The teaching of all these artistic forms will undoubtedly give rise to issues of pedagogy, teacher training, content and availability of resources. If as a Caribbean people we are to take the teaching of these forms seriously, then urgent and deliberate steps must be taken to deal with these issues. Very often exciting and good curricula are developed by Ministries of Education, but fall short on implementation because of human, physical and financial resources. Any curriculum for the teaching of Theatre and Dance and for the promoting of children's creativity and artistic traditions throughout the Caribbean must bear these issues in mind.

## **Guidelines for a Caribbean Theatre Arts Primary School Curriculum**

### **Philosophical framework**

The young children of our society are immersed at every turn during their waking hours by cable television programmes that are divorced from their artistic traditions. It is therefore important that Ministries of Education and Culture throughout the Caribbean develop curricula in Theatre Arts that will not only develop children's creativity, but also help them to understand and appreciate their artistic traditions.

With the present school budgetary restrictions and student/teacher ratio in our schools one has to present well thought out Theatre Arts programmes that can be easily implemented. Given the increasing attention being focussed on the role of the arts in cognition, for the development of all the intelligences, for problem-solving and conflict resolution; existing curricula can and should be revised so that Theatre

Arts, as both subject and methodologies are included. In addition to including content derived from cultural forms, to be taught across various subject areas such as: Social Studies, Literature, Language Arts, Religious Education, Science and Visual Arts; pupils should be taught the performance skills and techniques of these artistic forms via Dance and Drama classes.

The curricula, both formal and informal of new and existing programmes in Theatre Arts must be carefully examined to identify overlaps, to ameliorate under representation of cultural forms and to strive for greater cooperation between all the groups and institutions offering formal and informal training in Theatre Arts. There are many reasons for schools to develop strong partnerships with groups and organization involved in Theatre Arts. The major educational premise on which this partnership should be based is that they provide the linking mechanism between what students learn in school about Dance and Theatre to the more complete and satisfying opportunities to experience the arts as they perform them and see others perform them.

Basic curriculum concepts, goals and objectives for a Theatre Arts curriculum at the Primary school level should ensure that curriculum principles enabling content and practices are relevant, interesting and valuable enough to meet the needs of a changing more culturally aware and globally oriented society.

### **Curriculum Outline**

**Goal:** To improve pupils quality of aesthetic experiences, as well as foster their abilities to participate in theatrical performances.

#### **Grades One - Three**

##### **DANCE**

At the grades one to three levels, pupils should be able to:

- identify movement elements, as well as demonstrate the skills in dance.
- understand the principles, processes and structure for creating a dance
- understand dance as a way to create and communicate meaning
- improvise, create and perform dances
- understand the relationship between dance and healthy living.

#### **Grades four - six**

At the end of grade six pupils should be able to:

- understand various movements and their underlying principles

- know basic dance steps, body positions and spatial patterns
- perform dances using styles and traditions from across the Caribbean
- transfer rhythmic patterns from aural to kinesthetic
- understand the difference between pantomime and abstract gestures
- create dances that communicate topic/ideas of cultural significance
- know the cultural and historical contexts of various traditional dances
- use traditional dance steps in creative dance
- know strategies to prevent dance injuries
- participate in personal dance warm-up activities

## **CONTENT**

- basic motor and non-locomotor movements
- creating shapes
- use of personal and general space
- movements in straight and curved pathways
- movement to rhythmic accompaniment and response to change in tempo
- kinesthetic awareness, concentration, focus
- performance skills
- dance sequence
- ring games, traditional / folk forms and social ideas as dance stimuli
- copying, leading, following, mirroring
- difference between dance and other Physical Education movements
- interpretation and reaction to dance music
- performance techniques for traditional/folk dances
- healthy practices.

## **DRAMA/THEATRE**

### **Grades One -three**

At the grades one to three levels it is difficult to divorce drama/theatre from creative movement.

Pupils should be able to:

- use individual and group play to present dramatic scenarios
- use stories and games from around the Caribbean to create theatre
- initiate their own role-play activities
- demonstrate the ability to work with others
- perform mime activities using personal experiences
- use story drama and narration in theatrical performances
- use puppetry for theatrical presentations

- use props and costume to create characters
- use sound collage, sound scape and sound chronicle in their dramatic playing

### **Grades four - six**

By the end of grade six students should be able to:

- improvise dialogue
- write and record dialogue from improvised work
- assume roles that exhibit concentration, and contributes to the dramatic action
- use various cultural forms in the creation of theatrical performances
- interact with other characters in improvised and scripted scenes
- understanding the various settings and reasons for creating Theatre
- experiment with various ways of presenting classroom drama
- know ways in which Theatre reflects life
- use props, mask, costumes in character development and performances
- critique their dramatic presentations and those of their peers
- perform in theatrical performances for festivals, community and school functions

### **CONTENT**

- games
- puppetry
- role-play
- sound collage, sound scape and sound chronicle
- improvisation
- exploring the senses
- story telling- Anancy stories, Duppy stories
- proverbs, idioms, folk songs
- mime
- gestures and body language
- designing basic props, masks & costumes

### **Guide lines for Theatre Arts at the Secondary Levels.**

Theatre Arts speaks to our emotions, imagination and intellect and provides new for the interpreting of personal experiences. The study of Theatre Arts at the secondary level can help students develop a sense of connection with the past and with people of various races and culture; as well as help them to broaden their knowledge and understanding of human achievement. The skills and aesthetic experiences that, students can develop through their study of theatre arts prepare them for various career choices in the arts. Through their involvement in theatrical performances

students will develop skills which can be applied to many areas of their personal life.

### **Grade seven to nine**

#### **DANCE**

By the end of grade nine students should be able to:

- experience the creative processes in dance and theatre
- understand the functions of dance
- explore meaning in/ of Caribbean dance forms
- develop enough confidence and ability to explore issues with moral and social dimensions through dance
- perform complex steps and patterns from various dance styles and traditions
- create and perform a variety of modern dances.
- use the body confidently to communicate meaning through dance
- use improvisation to generate movement choreography
- understand how interpretation of dance can be influenced by personal experience
- know the similarities and differences among various contemporary theatrical forms of dance.

#### **CONTENT**

- skeletal alignment, agility and coordination in motor and nonlocomotor movements
- traditional dance forms
- creative dance process
- time elements – duple, triple meters etc
- improvisation
- music for dance
- dance interpretation
- creative dance technique
- popular dance
- life style
- contemporary images

#### **DRAMA/THEATRE**

##### **Grades seven - nine**

At the end of grade nine students should be able to:

- identify a range of physical skills and ways in which these can be

- developed through theatre
- assess the relationship between physical gestures, body language and theatrical performance
- use story telling in theatrical performance
- explore various Caribbean folk forms in the creation of theatre
- display tolerance for the cultural and artistic traditions of others
- portray a range of characters
- design, construct and decorate simple costumes, props and masks
- use costumes and props effectively to enhance characterization
- use voice to create and or alter mood of characters
- use the improvisation process to create theatre
- perform in theatrical performances for festival, community and school productions.
- Critique theatrical performances

### **CONTENT**

- self discovery
- Group exercises
- Story telling, story building
- Voice exploration
- Role-play
- improvisation
- theatre games
- mime work
- sense exploration
- mirror work
- trust work
- sequencing dramatic episodes
- characterization
- using external decoration
- setting the scene
- writing dialogue
- working with one act Caribbean plays
- rehearsal process
- presenting performance
- critiquing theatrical performances

### **Grades ten & eleven**

#### **DANCE**

The Dance curricula at the Primary and Lower Secondary levels should provide the base for the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate [CSEC] Theatre Arts.

The general objective for Dance is for candidates to:

- explore the elements of improvisation, playmaking and performance to communicate issues through Caribbean folk forms.

The main areas of study are:

- Dance improvisation
- Dance making
- Dance fundamentals

## **THEATRE**

The general objective is for candidates to:

- Explore the elements of improvisation, playmaking and performance to communicate issues through the use of Caribbean folk forms

The areas of study are:

- Drama improvisation
- Playmaking
- Performance skills

The syllabus is available from the Caribbean Examination Council's office.

## **RECOMMENDATION FOR TEACHER TRAINING**

Teacher training should be considered at both per-service and in-service. The training should be a collaborate effort involving, Ministries of Education and Culture, Teachers' Associations, Teachers' Colleges and tertiary institutions involved in Theatre Arts programmes.

Teachers' associations are vital to the training process, not only are they able to identify their own professional development needs; but they are strong lobbying bodies between Principal, Ministries of Education and Culture and other stake holders. Arts institutions can provide the expertise and that are necessary for training in Theatre Arts that may not be readily available in some Ministries of Education, as well as, in traditional teacher training colleges.

### **Rationale for Teacher Training**

Teachers represent the culturally supported forms and standards of the

subject they teach. The values and authority that, teachers can bring to Theatre Arts will depend on the kind of training and expertise they have in the art form, as well as in their own work as artists.

Primary school teachers are expected to teach all subject areas; they therefore have a right to be sufficiently trained in the skills and techniques to effectively deliver the curriculum.

Secondary school teachers are subject specialists. Theatre Arts teachers must be equipped with the techniques, skills and pedagogy of the art form they are required to teach. Dance and Theatre are process, experiential art forms that require the teacher to be able to demonstrate the relevant attitude, skills and techniques.

## **Primary School Teachers**

### **In-service Training**

#### **Aims**

- To prepare training for teachers in Dance and Drama/theatre to facilitate the teaching of the Primary school curriculum.
- To facilitate the use of Theatre Arts as a methodology for other subjects and for integration.
- To prepare teachers to use Theatre Arts to assist pupils in conflict resolution.
- To prepare teachers with the necessary skills and techniques for preparing theatrical performances.

### **In-service Models**

**Entry Requirement:** Teacher diploma or equivalent teacher certification

**Required hours:** 180 hrs.

**Model One:** Series of five day workshops

**Time frame:** One year or three terms

**Modules :** Six modules of five days per module

**Projected #:** 60 participants per year

**Model Two:** One Summer and One year of one day per week day release

**Time frame:** Four weeks during summer – 90 hrs contact time  
30 days of day release - 90 hrs contact time

**Model Three:** Theatre Arts Resource teachers / Theatre arts Master teachers

- Identify Primary school teachers who already have certification as Dance and Drama teachers
- Train them in two or three day workshops as resource teachers to train their peers in on going cluster workshops
- Identify practicing theatre artistes use them as master teachers, they teach Theatre Arts in three to five schools within a geographical location depending on school size. They also conduct on site training for the teachers in the schools they are assigned.

## CONTENT

### 1 Introduction to Theatre Arts in Education

- Philosophy of Theatre arts in education
- Dance as subject & as methodology
- Drama as subject & as methodology

### 2 Body as the Theatre Artist instrument

- Body awareness
- Movement exploration
- Improvisation for dance
- Improvisation for drama
- Dance techniques
- Movement for the actor
- Theatre techniques

### 3 Caribbean Artistic Traditions

- Oral traditions
- Exploration of folk forms for dance and theatre
- Traditional dance techniques
- Verbal and non-verbal communication – gestures, body language  
Dialect, creole, accents, speech patterns

### 4 Methodologies

- Drama conventions

- Dance pedagogy
- Theatre skills
- Elements of theatre
- Improvisation for teachers
- Directing with children
- Choreography for children
- Writing for children
- Composing and designing
- Critiquing theatre arts
- Lesson planning
- Methods of integration
- Practicum

### **Pre-service Training**

#### **Rationale**

All Teacher Training Colleges offering Primary education should make the training in Theatre Arts compulsory for student teachers. If they are expected to teach all the subjects at the primary levels, then they need to be adequately prepared to teach all the arts subjects in the curriculum.

At the Primary level also, Theatre Arts is an invaluable tool for teaching other subject areas and a vehicle for integration.

#### **CONTENT**

The body of content suggested for the in-service training can be offered as two 90 hour courses in Dance and Drama/Theatre .

**N.B. Tertiary Arts institutions in the Caribbean should offer diploma in Primary Theatre Arts in education programmes.**

### **Training for Secondary School Teachers**

#### **Philosophical Statement**

As we broaden our understanding of the conditions under which the teaching and learning of Theatre Arts throughout the Caribbean takes we need to re-examine how teachers of Theatre Arts are trained.

Should we continue to train teachers who are only qualified to teach:

- a. Dance

- b. Drama
- c. Dance and Physical Education

or should teachers of Theatre Arts be trained with the skills and techniques for teaching Dance, Theatre and Stage crafts?

The development of the Caribbean Examination Council's CSEC Theatre Arts makes this consideration an urgent one. The teacher/student ratio also places certain demands on school administrations thus causing them to make either/or choices in the arts. Consequently a number of specialist trained Dance teachers are unemployed.

Other options need to be considered alongside existing ones for the training of secondary school teachers, of Theatre Arts.

### **A Suggested Option**

#### **General Objectives:**

At the end of the three years training programme the teacher should be able to:

- confidently demonstrate skills and techniques learnt in Dance and Theatre
- apply the pedagogy of Dance and Theatre in classroom teaching
- guide students to explore elements of dance improvisation, drama improvisation to communicate issues through the use of Caribbean folk forms
- apply the principles of dance making and play making in the classroom teaching/learning process
- demonstrate understanding of the artistic traditions inherent in the Caribbean
- use skills of choreography and directing in producing Theatre
- apply critiquing skills in the interpreting and guiding of students' work.
- demonstrate an understanding of the relationship inherent in the history, style, gestures, body language of Caribbean peoples and how these influence Dance and Theatre in the Caribbean
- confidently teach the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate[CSEC] Theatre Arts

### **CONTENT**

This should cover areas of:

- Pedagogy
- Classroom management
- Drama improvisation
- Dance improvisation
- Play making
- Dance making

- Performance skills
- Directing skills
- Choreography
- Assessing theatre arts
- The study of Caribbean folk forms
- Stage crafts- costume, props, set design
- Practicum i.e. classroom and theatre

The student teacher should be exposed in a practical way to the work of professional theatre groups.

**Tertiary Performing Arts institutions within the region should begin to teach Theatre Arts degree programmes.**

Prepared by Nolma Coley-Agard Ph.D.  
Education Officer- MOEC. Jamaica  
e-mail- [ncagard@cwjamaica.com](mailto:ncagard@cwjamaica.com)