

The Haunted Lift

On the ground floor
Of this ultra modern tower block
In the dead middle of the night
The lift doors open with a clang.

Nobody enters and nobody comes out
In the dead middle of the night
The lift doors close with a clang.
And the lift begins to move slowly up
With nobody in it, nobody but the ghost of a girl
Who lived here once on the thirteenth floor
Of this ultra modern tower block.

One day she went to play,
In an old part of town
and never came back
She said she was going to the corner shop
But she never came home.

Now her ghost keeps pressing
In the dead middle of the night
The button for the thirteenth floor
But when the doors open with a clang
She cannot step out.
She gazes longingly, at the familiar landing
But only for a moment, then the lift doors clang in her face.
And her tears silently flow.

Sometimes on the thirteenth floor, her mother and father
With her photo beside their bed,
Wake up in the dead middle of the night
And wonder who it could be
Using the lift at such an unearthly hour.

In this ultra modern tower block,
There is no thirteenth floor.

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Lesson One:

Resources - Poem of "The Haunted Lift", Sugar Paper and marker pens.

Aims and objectives: Work co-operatively in mixed gender groups.
Contribute ideas without calling out.
Listen to others.
Learn the following drama terms. **Set, role and character.**

1. Warm-up. Clapping (name game). Ice breaker/Introductions.
2. Read the poem. What is it about? Draw out the mystery of the 13th floor. What do they associate with the number 13.
3. Re-read the contradiction in the last line. Do class have an explanation for this?
4. Ask the class if they were to create a piece of Drama based on the poem, where would it take place? Introduce the word **set**.
5. Divide the class into mixed gender groups of approximately 5. Give each group a piece of sugar paper and a marker pen. Each group build a description of the "The Haunted Lift". Put these on the wall.
6. Introduce the idea that there is a caretaker who looks after the "ultra modern tower block" who is female. The person who will play this **role** will need a description of the **character**. What will we need to consider? (Voice, movement and mannerisms). Write these ideas down on sugar paper and display with descriptions of "The Haunted Lift."
7. Imagine the Drama is about to begin. Ask the class to rearrange the seats to define the acting space. Steer them towards sitting in the shape of the lift.
8. Define onstage/off stage.
9. Evaluate work - what have we achieved today? What Drama terms have been used/learnt. Can anyone find any of these words on the "Drama Vocabulary" display?

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Lesson Two:

Aims and objectives: To make decisions about characters.
To introduce **Teacher in role, role-play, depictions and freezing.**
To look at stereotyping with regard to appearance.
To introduce **spontaneous improvisation.**

1. Recap last weeks lesson with particular reference to decisions made and the mystery of the thirteenth floor mentioned in the poem.
2. Get the class to sit in the shape of the lift.
3. Teacher describes the lift to the class with reference to the class description. Teacher stands in the middle of the lift and tells the following story. "*If you stand in particular place in the lift and look over your right shoulder you can see, written in something that looks like red paint the words; "PLEASE HELP M."* The only person who ever sees these words is the caretaker. Early every morning, she goes into the lift and cleans off the words but the next day, in exactly the same place, the words have reappeared and she has to clean them off again and again.
4. Class move out of lift shape and back into a circle.
5. Class discussion about what they have just heard.
6. A new family have just moved into the ultra modern tower block. A parent and a child. As a class, they must decide on : gender of parent, gender, name, age of child and the floor they will be living on.
7. In pairs, they have three minutes to create a **depiction** which shows the parent and child in their new flat.
8. It is later that day and the parent realizes that s/he needs bread and milk. The parent noticed a corner shop close to the tower block as they were moving their furniture in. They send their daughter/son to the shops with a lift. When the child returns from the shop, s/he gets into the lift. There is someone in there. Short spontaneous improvisation in pair to show who the other person is.
9. Class get into lift shape. Chose a volunteer to go into role as the child.
10. Teacher in role as the caretaker in the lift. She is looking over her shoulder and cleaning the words off the wall as in the story. The pupil enters the lift and the caretaker tells the child to get out of the lift as it is dangerous. Let the improvisation run for a few minutes.
11. Explain that this was a **spontaneous improvisation**. Discuss who were the characters? Impressions of the caretaker (what influenced these impressions ie physical appearance), reaction of the child? Why did s/he react in this way. What did the caretaker actually say to the child? Has the caretaker been stereotyped?
12. Evaluate what has been learnt in terms of drama and in terms of stereotyping. Refer to new words learnt on "Drama Vocabulary" display.

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Lesson Three:

Aims and Objectives: To develop **spontaneous improvisation** skills
To introduce **prepared improvisation**
To examine parent/child relationships
To evaluate the drama used and the meaning created.

1. Recap last weeks lesson.
2. Ask for a volunteer to go into **role**. While the child went to the shop, the parent began to clean the new flat. The volunteer is briefed and they are cleaning the new front door. Remind them that they have just moved into the building and they don't know anything about the lift or the stories surrounding it. They will be meeting a new character and must create a **spontaneous improvisation** showing their reaction whilst in role as a parent. The rest of the class must watch carefully. They will be asked questions about what they have seen.
3. **Teacher in role** as a door to door sales person who is selling cleaning products. S/he is a friendly gossip who includes the following in the **improvisation**.
"You're new here aren't you? On your own? Oh dear, A child! How are they? I'm surprised the council let you move in here with a child of that age. Well, it's what people say around here, it's probably just suspicious nonsense. The parents around here don't let their children use the lift. Apparently, a girl who lived in this tower block disappeared a few years ago and it's said that her ghost haunts the lift. The adults around here don't like to talk about it. I suppose they think.....well, you know what youngsters are like."
4. What kind of character was the teacher? What happened in the scene? What might happen next?
5. In pairs, improvise the scene where the child returns home from the shop after meeting the Caretaker in the lift.
6. Discuss with class; What has happened? What will happen next? What can the parent do to stop the child going into the lift? Issues may arise such as why don't young people do as they are told? Should young people do as they are told? Motives of adults? Is there an answer to this problem?
7. **Prepared improvisation**. Later that evening, the parent has gone to bed. The child tries to sneak out. S/he is discovered fully clothed in the bedroom. There is a bag on the bed. A torch is beside it. Watch some of these.
8. Evaluation what has been learnt this lesson about drama? What other things have they thought about? Refer to techniques used on the "Drama Vocabulary" display.

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Lesson four:

Resources - lighting.

Aims and objectives: To develop an awareness of **staging**.
To develop an awareness of how to create **atmosphere/use of lighting**.
To examine **stereotyping**.

1. Recap on last weeks lesson and remind class of story so far.
2. The child has decided to sneak out. What might happen? S/he might meet someone else in the corridor. Who are they? What are they doing out that time of night?
3. In pairs, the class will **improvise** the scene. They must consider what kind of atmosphere they need to create, the level of voices, is it cold?
4. How would the class stage this scene? Possibly sitting in a corridor shape with the lift at the end.
5. Watch the improvisations and use the lighting to enhance the **atmosphere**.
6. Evaluate how they created atmosphere, attitudes and the reactions if the characters. What might happen next?
7. Two volunteers are chosen to go into **role**. They go into the lift and meet the caretaker. They must react in **role**. They meet the caretaker who is again very forceful. S/he demands that the children get out of the lift as it is dangerous.
8. Evaluate the reactions of the children to the caretaker. What did the caretaker say? What was her intention? Can the students think of situations where they have judged someone because of their appearance?
9. What have we learnt about drama in this lesson? What other things have we thought about?
10. What might happen next if we are to continue the drama? Use these suggestions to develop the last few lessons of this half term.

Possible continuations:

If the class decide that the child disappears which is a popular suggestion, you may want to call a meeting in role of local parents to develop the story.

Possible **Hot Seating** of caretaker. Her daughter is the ghost. The caretaker feels to blame for her disappearance as she let her out alone.

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