Drama and critical thinking Essay

Since the early days of curriculum theory development, education professionals and teachers have been increasingly concerned about the role which drama could play in helping students develop higher order thinking and empathy. Researchers and scholars have persistently sought to establish the direct link between the quality of student reasoning and creative representation and the amount of time students devote to participating in drama. As a result, drama has turned into the essential component of a successful learning process, and whether teachers are able to motivate students to think critically depends on the place they give to drama in the structure of all learning activities.

            Undoubtedly, drama is the direct pathway to teaching older students think more efficiently. Given that the students’ ability to process and retain knowledge depends on the way they think, organize, and embed the new information into their learning and cultural contexts, the use of drama provides students with a chance to “build a community in the classroom, to evaluate themselves and the other members of the class, and to hold a common vision of what the class should be and do” (Morris, 2001). More importantly, drama encourages higher order thinking and empathy through better student expression, participation, and decision-making. The use of drama in social studies, for example, allows students to conduct inquiry; in many instances, taking responsibility for planning drama in class leads students to displaying increased empathy and persistence at all stages of the learning process (Taylor, 1992). Finally, drama is just one out of many means to challenge traditional curriculum contents and to review it from a different angle, providing the ground for student creativity, active thinking, and democratic participation in the process of discussing the most problematic curriculum aspects.

            The natural question is how drama promotes the development of critical thinking skills in students. Different scholars provide different explanations. O’Toole, Stinson and Moore (2009) suggest that in drama students become the direct participants of a fictional context; they are compelled to abandon their previously passive roles of side observers and are pushed into a new environment where empathy and reasoning determines their success as of actors. Moreover, the use of drama in classroom “demands that the participants are not only given a degree of freedom in how they interpret their roles and functions, but they are usually invited at certain points to help or even take a lead in planning the drama itself” (O’Toole, Stinson & Moore, 2009). Gallagher (2001) writes that higher order thinking is the necessary skills students require to construct social realities in drama. As a result, by linking curriculum, classroom activities, and drama, teachers can readily help students understand and evaluate their location in specific social context, as well as to make reasonable choices with the aim to change or advance their social realities.

            For the majority of contemporary curriculum designers and education professionals, drama resembles a kind of a learning ritual, which effectively combines critical thinking stimuli and relative cost-effectiveness. Students are encouraged to participate in drama in order to exhibit their creative representation skills. Students use drama to step away from mechanistic approaches to education and to become increasingly involved into constructing higher level meanings. In drama, students make essential connections between problems, solutions, and their decision-making options. Finally, students learn to solve problems by means of consensus, retention, and linking knowledge to real-world situations (Morris, 2001). All these elements inevitably lead to the development of higher order thinking and empathy in students. Drama is an effective instrument of transforming traditional school knowledge into real contextual knowledge; it is the source of knowledge authenticity and the direct pathway to increasing the instrumental value of studies. Ultimately, drama can be effectively utilized in classroom to help teachers meet their primary obligations by embedding students’ classroom achievements with their personal experiences and thoughts.

A theater educator can bring many positive changes to future development of your child. Amanda Jones, who has about forty years of experience of working with children made the following statement: “Theater addresses the skills which benefit children's education and development in five general areas: physical development (kinesthetic skills) artistic development (drama and theater skills,) mental development (thinking skills) personal development (intra-personal skills) and social development (interpersonal skills).” (Kimberly Haynes What Drama Education Can Teach Your Child by. Topics: Inspiring Creativity in Your Child, Dramahttp://www.education.com/magazine/article/What\_Drama\_Education\_Can\_Teach/)

The same idea is being accentuated with the help of testimonials from the side of the parents who also watched the successes of their children. Still, the other research shows that many parents are really worried about the success of their children. According to the testimonials of these people, many of them are worried about the fact that participation in drama courses may seriously damage the success of their children. Of particular importance is the academic success of the children. The result of the study that was initiated by a UCLA showed just the opposite: the study concluded that students who were involved in the arts showed the tendency to have higher academic performance and

The benefits of the theatrical education are quite obvious. These include the following achievements: improved self-confidence, better public speaking skills. These are just the few of the benefits that can be brought by the theatrical education. The success of the students is embedded in the following things:

ability to work with an ensemble in cooperative ventures

ability to work through consensus and differences or obstacles to achieve a goal

(Kimberly Haynes What Drama Education Can Teach Your Child by. Topics: Inspiring Creativity in Your Child, Dramahttp://www.education.com/magazine/article/What\_Drama\_Education\_Can\_Teach/)

Studying theater has all rights to be regarded as one of the great starting point for careers. The careers include the following areas: teaching, law, and politics. The involvement in drama classes may play rather outstanding role for child’s future involvement in broadcasting and performing.

The author also has the ability to speak confidently in front of a group. This is being done at the very beginning of person’s career.  The author of the articles focuses on the fact that if a child is interested in getting involved in theater he/she should pay attention to the following things:  Theater is not designed for the outgoing activities. The activity is not a beneficial one for those children, who are afraid to be in the spotlight. Along with that, such children must be prepared for the commitment. This world is very difficult to perceive for those who do not known the meaning of this world.

The article also contains special advice for parents who are encouraged to support their children in pursue of their acting career. The production of the whole scene involves a lot of work. The work is based on a quite big range of rehearsals. That is why it is very important for the parents to practice really big range of activities.

The author of the article also advices parents to achieve a better involvement into the process of their child education. Parents are advised to develop the appreciation of their children’s performance.

As for the issue of advocate further theatrical education, this issue is highly controversial since theatrical education is very important point of your child further development however, this thing is rather optional. It means that everything depends of the choice that is supposed to be made by your child.

Drama activities can be described as the ones that help both children and adults with to make better career in this life. The major benefit achieved is the development of self-esteem. Drama is very useful for people with special needs. Along with that, drama is very necessary for the leader to make it safe for the group to be creative.

Too common school defines drama activity as “a sedentary process confined to the English department”. My idea is that the exploration of the work of the dramatists as well as the participation in the drama activities can greatly improve the performance of the children in the classroom.

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Kimberly Haynes What Drama Education Can Teach Your Child by. Topics: Inspiring Creativity in Your Child,

# Closing of the catholic churches

Downsizing and the Catholic Church

Communities across America are now witnessing the unusual tendency: a number of, parishes, schools, community centers and hospitals affiliated with the church are being closed. So, it is not a big wonder that the whole thing has aroused much anguish. Still, taking into account the above mentioned circumstances, filing for a lawsuit can be regarded as rather an unwise step. The situation is largely reasoned by the fact that the major part of the religious decisions is left to the church. All these institutions are known for providing the foundation — as well as provided for the faith — of urban neighborhoods and immigrant communities.

The example may serve Manhattan's East Village, where St. Brigid's foundation was closed in 2001. The organization wasbuilt as the institution that was supposed to serve as a spiritual home and social haven for refugees from the Irish potato famine. New time has brought many new changes. One of these was the plan to tear down the church. There is even the evidence that a number of preservationist groups have been suing Cardinal Edward Egan and tried to block the demolition. (Downsizing and the Catholic Church)

The problem was often solved by means of litigation. Litigation is the usual thing for Americans, who got used to righting perceived wrongs through the courts. However, there is one thing that prohibits court from intrusion into such personal thing as religion – Americans’ constitutional commitment to religious freedom. The whole idea can be summarized in the following way - “some hard decisions are just none of judges' business”.

Stories about these closings are often accompanied by angry reactions. The most widely discussed issue in the papers was the close of Saint Michael the Archangel. For quite a long period this institution has been serving as a place for Polish-Americans in Boston. The institution was joined by more than 60 area parishes. The whole event was described by the Boston Globe. According to the paper, the final Mass was emotional and was marked by prayer and protest.

The year 2005 has been marked by the closing of the last Catholic hospital in Brooklyn. St. Mary's Hospital was closed after after 123 years of service. No less harm to the catholic heritage was brought with the launch of New York reorganization plan. The launch of the reorganization plan threatened to end in the closing of more than 30 parishes and a dozen schools. About 170 parochial schools nationwide were reported to close during the past years. In general, the amount of churches that have been closed has reached the number of 1,600. These churches have been closed during the past two decades. The data has been voiced by the National Catholic Educational Association.

The above described situation is largely reasoned by the following facts:

Demographic changes (the last decade has been marked by the movement of Catholics to growing suburbs. As a result, many of the institutions that initially were under the governance of Catholic Church were left unobserved. The level of the church attendance has fallen down.

The changing attitudes of Catholics. New time brought new tendencies to the society. The whole thing pertains both to the clergy and the people alike. The other factor that matters is the protestant religion that is gaining power and popularity especially among the younger generation. No less important thing that must be mentioned in this paper is the decrease of popularity of Catholic education. Also, one must mention the fact of the declining number of priests and religious sisters. The evidence shows that less people show the will to become priests. Although the number of Catholics in America continues to grow, the churches face the need to somehow attract people into priesthood.

One more thing that matters is the development of pressures and increasing costs. A great number of the financial challenges are associated with the aftermath of the clergy-sex-abuse scandal, and old-fashioned mismanagement.

People may sympathize with those for whom the churches are closing. I think the whole thing is very painful for the community. As a result, many people do suffer because they have to forget about their customs and traditions, and it is not always right thing to close churches from the humanistic considerations. Closing of a parish is painful because of family memories and the prevalence of ethnic traditions.

I have been a member of my parish for more than 15 years. I certainly do not feel positive about the need to attend mass at another church. When visiting other places I feel betrayed, and deprived of the things that have been naturally considered as my own. This is certainly not right, and I am very unhappy about the whole thing. The situation is largely reasoned by the shortage of Priests. The situation is largely problematic, and I think that certain things must be done to improve the typical way of things. First and foremost thing that must be done is the need to push priests to marry. Also, the Catholics must change attitude to this world. I still think that Catholics are too strict in reference to the other people. These and many other changes account for low attendance of the church.

                                                           Why should we care?

Why we should care. Before giving answer to this question I would say that Catholic schools do play a big role for Catholic religion. I still hold to the idea that Catholic Church do play a big role for urban Catholic schools. The church educates people in the way so as to give them a chance to get hope, safety, opportunity and values that are important to vulnerable and marginalized children of all religions, undependable of their ethnicities and backgrounds. Similarly, Catholic hospitals have also played a big role for the community. For long these institutions cared for underserved and disadvantaged people in both urban and rural areas. The presence of Catholic hospitals helped to fill glaring gaps in the availability of health care.

I think that the evidence presented above is enough to reassure you that certain actions must be taken for preservation of Catholic institutions. People should remember that these institutions changes public opinion for good.

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