Day 83 · A place with something to do

Tiny goal: Give your character a place and a tiny problem.

Flexible suggested 25-minute start: split, shorten, extend or stop for this group. No measured lesson duration or child outcome is supplied.

Welcome and set up · suggested 3 min

Offer large place cards: pretend café, garden, library, repair desk, space stop, or the child's own invented place. Use words or plain original drawings; do not copy a commercial character or actual library collection design. Make room for private play.

Say: “Give your character a place and a tiny problem. You can choose, ask for help or pass.”

Model or preserve the fresh attempt · suggested 4 min

“Pip is at the pretend café. The customer wants a pancake, but Pip has not asked which one.” Play Pip asking, waiting and hearing a reply from your own second puppet. “I invented this problem. It is not a real order.”

Choose a way in · suggested 5 min

1. Place card theatre. Choose a large card and place your puppet beside it. Invent one thing it wants there and play what happens. The place can remain represented by a word; a built set is optional.

2. Two everyday objects. Use two approved large objects to suggest a place, such as a desk and waiting area. Let your character have a problem there. The object arrangement is a set; the dramatic event is the actual character contribution.

3. Tell the operator. Choose a place and give a willing operator the first moment. Direct one change to the situation after their attempt. Attribute your story direction and their played actions separately.

Make, try and respond · suggested 7 min

Child chooses a place and situation, plays a beginning and one response, then tests whether the place makes sense with the character's job. Invite the child to change either the job, place or event. They can keep the situation unresolved. A real partner must agree to a role; otherwise the child or adult may play a clearly attributed fictional second role.

Ask: “Where is yours? What happens there?”

If the child needs a next move: If the child chooses a place only, invite one thing to happen there, rather than supply the whole plot. If their idea needs unavailable materials or another person, offer an imaginary version or defer it; do not record the plan as a played scene.

Notice what happened · suggested 4 min

“What was given? What did you add?” Note the chosen place and the child's own added situation. A depicted person is not an actual audience or an actual agreement.

Keep and finish · suggested 2 min

Save a scene card or just the puppet and the chosen place name.

Next teaching move: Next time agree how another willing maker can add a moment without taking the character over. For an unclear situation, return to one want and one obstacle.

Teacher evidence note: Record actual actor/action/support, the child's own idea, any source units encountered and any actual willing maker/audience. Label plan, helper action, source reasoning, rehearsal and unavailable evidence. A paper plan is not performed puppetry. Direction is a child contribution; name the actual operator separately. Do not infer emotion or understanding from gaze, pose, silence or an intended effect.

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