My English Fairy-tale.

1. Why should we fuss?

It’s not a secret that at times it’s rather problematic to make schoolchildren use the language they learn. They may be full of their best intentions at the lesson, but seem to forget everything at home, which shows not the teacher’s low skill (as he anyway makes it interesting for the student AT the lesson), but the whole lot of other factors, that put English back from the front rows. These may be loads of homework, exhaustion, distracting things like telly, and whatnot. And a strange thing that has nothing to do with the lack of motivation, but rather a kind of disbelief that “it really works”, especially if the student has no experience of communication with foreigners.

how can the teacher give his students this wonderful feeling of the practical value of the language? There are many ways to do it, but the brightest and the most wonderful is the theatre! Among its advantages there are:

* Pronunciation, which can be strongly improved; intonations, which will certainly be enriched.
* Communication problems, which turn to be much easier to solve.
* General recognition within own age group, parents and teachers.
* And when the students try and taste it, this may open doors into big literature!
* The feeling that it’s not so hard and scary as it seems at first sight. On the contrary, it’s a fruitful field, paying seven times for any effort.
* This is something your kids will never forget. Rereading O’Henry, Mark Twain, Maugham and many other authors, I can’t help hearing the voice of my own English teacher… Ada Petrovna, thank you!

2. FAQ

How to choose the tale:

1. Pay attention to its length, lexical level, suitability for comprehension.
2. Count the amount of characters. Consider it, if it is possible to subtract, or, which is needed much more often, to add some. Groups are usually bigger than that in the most traditionally staged fairy-tales, and all the kids are usually willing to participate. i added the necessary amount of Vegetables, dancing and singing a song while becoming a part of the Birthday Soup (this is how the fairy-tale was called, too).
3. Evaluate special effects needed: not all of them are good for school stage/

How to choose actors:

1. Don’t be afraid of comic effects, it the genre allows.
2. Turn to the class teacher for advice.
3. Be ready to explain your choice, especially to teens, they are very peculiar about the impression they produce.

How to work with the role:

1. Read each student’s role for him on his phone for the sake of phonetics. They will definitely add their own understanding, but still they should have what to start with.
2. Ask the students read their role ro parents, so that the parents mark the amount of attempts. it also works pretty well for good reading and retell in class.
3. Let the students read the original thing and watch the screenings, if they exist, and discuss them.
4. Listen to each student separately first.
5. Explain carefully, where they are supposed to stand and what to do, and how to move.

How and where to train:

1. The bigger stage demands microphones!
2. Arrange the line, which the students will have to be in front of: kids tend to get closer to the back of the stage, so they are heard much worse.
3. It should be pretty clear for the students, that they should talk to the spectators even talking to each other, so they should know how to stand.
4. Draw the scheme with voice vectors, if needed. Senior students may be recommended to read “Theatre” by Somerset Maugham.

How to avoid problems with facilities:

1. Very few people can make as amazing mixture of genres and styles as there is in “Jesus Christ, Superstar”, so sometimes it’s easier to change the role, if it’s not the main one.
2. Paper masks are sometimes a solution, as well as wigs.
3. Musical tracks should be saved on several memory sticks!
4. Parents of young children can be very helpful but demanding, while senior students may know a lot of useful people.
5. Staging X-mas tales, you can separate episodes by means of crackers, especially if the stage has no curtain.

3. Other secrets.

Theatre demands wider world outlook, so kids naturally start reading more. Here are some ways to take the most of it.

1. Role retell: let the students retell the story as one of the heroes. Some details will lighten up, others may vanish, accents will differ, too… This activity will help them understand the importance of a viewpoint, develop their imagination and language skills.
2. The Princess Saw A Frog: rewrite a story avoiding the key words, in our case, frog, prince, princess, pond and castle. This enriches synonyms.
3. Jigsaw puzzle: print the summary of a book and cut into pieces of two or three sentences, let the students put events in order. Good for team work. Or take two stories, and mix their plots, so that the students separated and rearranged them. These can be picture stories as well.
4. … and we never saw him again. These are the words to end up the story. sort of free writing with the only limitation, the amount of words.
5. An Alternative Cinderella: the task is named after the humorous story under the same title, which is easily found on the Internet. The idea is to rewrite the story in modern terms. Or, vice versa, some modern events can be retold being taken back in time…
6. There are stories that leave a controversial impression, like “The Devoted Friend” by Oscar Wilde. It’ll be interesting to arrange a trial over Miller, giving the students roles of witnesses, lawyers, prosecutors, and even Hans himself as a ghost, why not…
7. The students may write their own play!

To sum up, it’s needless to say how important it is to make the schoolchildren learn to learn, to use English and to regularly master their skills. Theatre and literature give us a perfect opportunity to achieve this goal.