

Freeze-frames - a dramatic activity

On your marks:

Freeze-frames, also known as tableaux or snapshots, are a useful well-known drama technique for showing a moment in the middle of the action or for showing an abstract concept in a concrete way.

Get set:

You only need actors and space.

Go:

Basically, your actors work in small groups to make a still or 'frozen' scene.

Here are some ways you could use freeze-frames to introduce and explore the story you're working on.

Once you have told them the story, ask the groups to make a **freeze-frame of a moment from the story**, for example the most exciting moment, the most tense moment, the worst moment, the funniest moment, the most dangerous moment... Discuss the differences between groups and why they chose the moments they did.

To explore a concept, ask groups to make a freeze-frame of it, for example 'bravery', 'wisdom', 'holiness', 'sin'. The groups could choose a title for their freeze-frame to say out loud. Discuss what arises.

To give a familiar story freshness, ask groups to prepare freeze-frames beforehand with titles for moments in the story but which don't give away the story itself. So for example, to tell the feeding of the five thousand (John 6), you could ask for freeze-frames with these titles:

- The gang on the hilltop
- The crowds are coming!
- How will you solve this problem?
- One little person among all the big ones
- Sit down!
- Thank God for food!
- Stuffed
- You are the king!

You can then tell the story, using these freeze-frames as you might pictures in a book.

And after the telling, groups could discuss whether they would tweak any details to make their frame more effective.

Freeze-frames are a quick and easy way of showing **different possible outcomes for a situation**, so can be used as a basis for discussion. For example, if you are looking at Matthew 18 and Jesus' teaching on greatness, you could use freeze-frames like this:

'A group of young dukes, duchesses and barons were quarrelling about which of them would be the greatest when the prince came to the throne. In the end they went to the prince and asked him to tell them how they would know who was the greatest.

The prince replied: If you want to be the greatest, you must...'

Decide what the prince said to them.

Now make a freeze-frame in your groups of the nobles doing what the prince says, and showing its effect on the people around them.

When you've seen these and discussed them, read / make a freeze-frame of what Jesus said in similar circumstances.

You can use freeze-frames to **set the scene** for your story. For example, you could show the group a picture of an empty street in a biblical town and ask them to take up position in your space doing something that someone from that street might be doing one morning. They can start moving and talking and interacting when you say 'Action' and freeze again when you say 'Freeze'. When they are frozen, you could go an interview them as to who they are, why they're there, what they're up to, how they're feeling, etc. Then a story can be told with a real sense of an owned place: ' One morning in the main street of Jericho, people were going about their normal business...'

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