

What is Theatre in Education and 5 reasons why it supports education of young people

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Fun, memorable & engaging.

What is Theatre in Education? Have you heard of it? Do you know how it works? Many forward-thinking organisations are utilising the benefits of Theatre in Education (TiE) as an innovative way to engage, challenge and inspire children and young people about important life choices and social health issues.

What is Theatre in Education?

Traditionally: 'Theatre in Education (TiE) is a process that uses interactive theatre/drama practices to help aid the educational process.'

The Belgrade Theatre are pioneers in TiE who delivered a free TiE service to schools across Coventry between 1965 and 1996. The Theatre in Education movement soon spread to theatres across the UK, and then to broader contexts across the globe, inspiring a wide range of participatory theatre with children and young people, encouraging and empowering them to investigate challenging situations for themselves.

Gibber have devised effective TIE since 1997 by combining live theatre, multimedia and interactive activities that are age appropriate, relevant and credible with a target audience. Underpinned by curriculum mapping to ensure pedagogic integrity and delivered by talented, young actors to ensure credibility. Teacher resource packs including worksheets to extend, develop and reinforce learning can be supplied.

Why does TiE support education and help to achieve learning objectives?

1. **It is inspirational.**

Through the medium of TiE children and young people become engaged in their own learning, excited and aware. Drawn in by the immediacy and power of the live theatre that is presented by highly skilled professional actors; the relevance and realism of the content resonates, helping the audience to reflect on behaviour and assimilate identified learning objectives.

2. **It challenges perceptions, changes attitudes & behaviour.**

Theatre in education provides a safe learning environment for children and young people where they are able to think about the issues raised and examine the consequences of actions for themselves. 'young people' characters in a performance are reflective of the young people in the audience akin to peer mentors, credible and likeable, which helps young people to incorporate the messages into their own thinking. Identification with the characters portrayed has been presented by some as a prerequisite for attitudinal and behaviour change (Cohen 2001). Perceived realism and authenticity.

3. **It improves self-esteem, motivation and achievement.**

By using drama as a learning tool young people can add purpose and value to their creativity and find their own unique ways to discover the answers for themselves. Working in this way ultimately improves self-esteem, motivation and achievement.

4. **It delivers key messages that are easily understood and remembered.**

Theatre in education encourages young people to develop enquiry skills. It questions what influences are all around them which in turn impacts on behaviours and attitude, empowering them to make informed, healthy life choices. The ability of Theatre in Education to portray topics in a very visual way and to provide a context for the information provided was given as a strength of this method in that it allows young people to make inferences about what the information provided means for themselves in everyday life (Mages et al. 2007) When you combine learning with a fun and enjoyable experience it is evident that the messages are more likely to be understood and remembered.

5. **It maximises learning.**

Theatre in education programmes are designed to maximise pupils' learning and cater for a variety of pupils' preferred learning styles. Based on Fleming's **VAR**K (Visual, Aural, Read/write, and Kinaesthetic) learning style directed pedagogy to ensure maximum engagement and retention of messages, Gibber's TiE programmes combine contemporary technologies with tried and tested drama based communications to connect, inspire and change young people's attitudes and behaviour. Our TiE production sets incorporate a back projected media screen which is used to ensure a multi-sensory learning experience that maximises pupil learning and supports delivery of key learning objectives.