

Wolfgang Butzkamm

Two sketches for special occasions – easy to play, fun to act out

Class 5 and class 7.

(Die publizierte Version ist illustriert)

The topic

When language is acted out, it takes on meaning. It saves repetitions, necessary as they are, from being purely mechanical and gives pupils an opportunity of exercising their creative powers, although they want to stick closely to the text.

We suggest that you reserve the two sketches or skits for special purposes, as a Drama Project on Project Day or for a performance in front of parents.

Unfortunately, we could not find out who wrote the beautiful Cinderella Sketch. Thank you, dear author, whoever and wherever you are.

Brewer's *Dictionary of phrase and fable* informs us that Cinderella was first popularized by Charles Perrault's *Contes de ma mère l'oye* (1697). Cinderella is drudge of the house, dirty with housework, while her elder sisters go to fine balls. At length a fairy enables her to go to the prince's ball; the prince falls in love with her, and she is discovered by means of a glass slipper which she drops, and which will fit no foot but her own. The glass slipper is a mistranslation of *pantoufle en vair*, so it is really made of fur, not *en verre*. This special fur (sable = Zobel) was worn only by kings and princes, so the fairy gave royal slippers to her favourite. Cinderella, in French "Cendrillon", is aptly named "Aschenputtel" in German, because of "la cendre", die Asche.

Suggested treatment

Step 1

For initial presentation of the dialogues we recommend the sandwich-technique. However, because the texts are longer and at the same time easier than usual, the teacher should take care to adapt the technique to the texts and not draw out the presentation phase more than is actually needed.

Step 2

After the text has been presented to the class, we suggest you use Michael West's "read-and-look-up- technique". That means pupils work in groups and go through the script in the following way: Whoever is going to speak looks down at the script and takes in his line. He then raises his head and, making eye contact with the person he is addressing, delivers his line. If this procedure is followed, nobody just reads his line aloud. Pupils should not be mechanically repeating what they have learned by heart, parrot fashion, but should be encouraged to put their own interpretation on the lines, using their voices, and their own ideas about facial expressions and body language.

Step 3 (for Cinderella-Sketch only)

Collect all the adjectives that have been introduced by the textbook so far. As the pupils call them out loud, write them up on the board. Get two pupils to assist you at the blackboard, so the writing will not take too much time. Then conduct a bilingual rapid-fire drill with mother tongue cues as follows (Das muß Schlag auf Schlag gehen!):

Sie ist schön.	She is beautiful
Sie ist nicht häßlich.	She is not ugly.
Ist sie häßlich?	Is she ugly?
Nein, (isse nich).	No, she isn't / No, she is not.
Sie ist ruhig / still.	She is quiet.
Sie ist ein stilles Mädchen.	She's a quiet girl.
Sie ist glücklich.	She is happy.
Bist du auch glücklich?	Are you happy, too?
Nein, ich bin nicht glücklich, ich bin einsam.	No, I'm not; I'm lonely.
Schau mal, graue Wolken.	Look, grey clouds.
Die sind nicht grau, die sind schwarz.	They are not grey, they are black.
Aber sie sind schön.	But they are beautiful.
Sind sie (wirklich) schön?	Are they (really) beautiful?
Sind die nicht schön?	Aren't they beautiful.
Sind die nicht wunderbar?	Aren't they wonderful.
Sind die nicht fantastisch?	Aren't they fantastic?
Nee, sind se nich.	No, they aren't.
Doch, sind se doch.	Yes, they are.
Sie sind schwarz, grau, blau und grün.	They are black, grey, blue and green.
usw.	

Step 4

For a public performance outside class, you need stage props, such as a paper crown and a cape for Prince Charming etc. Ask parents for help.

Textsheet 1 Cinderella Sketch

Characters

C. Cinderella	N. Narrator	P. Prince Charming
U. Ugly Sister	F. Fairy Godmother	

(The characters introduce themselves)

N. The Story of Cinderella: I am the Narrator
 C. I am Cinderella
 P. I am Prince Charming.
 U. I am the Ugly Sister.
 F. I am the Fairy Godmother.
 C. I am beautiful.
 P. I am handsome.
 U. I am ugly
 F. I am good.

N. Scene one. The Kitchen

C. I am sad.
 U. I am going to the ball, clean my shoes.

C. Alright.
U. Press my dress.
C. Alright.
N. End of scene one.

N. Scene two. The kitchen.

C. I am sad.
F. Why are you sad?
C. I am not going to the ball.
F. You may go to the ball.
C. Alright.
N. There comes a coach.
F. Be back before twelve midnight.
C. Alright.
N. End of scene two.

N. Scene three. The ball.

U. Who's that?
P. She's beautiful.- Will you dance?
C. Alright.
N. DING DONG!
C. I must go.
P. She's left her slipper.
N. End of scene three.

N. Scene four. The kitchen.

C. I am sad.
N. Enter the Prince.
P. Try this on.
U. It fits.
P. It doesn't. - You try this.
C. It fits.
P. It does. I love you.
C. I love you.
P. Marry me.
C. Alright. I am happy.
U. I am sad.
P. I am married.
F. I am still good
N. The end.

Textsheet 2
Silly Questions Sketch

(From: G. E. Tunnel, "English without tears", in: *English teaching Forum* 1/80, p.6- 9)

Characters: two men, two girls.

Two men on a park bench. A is reading a newspaper.

A. (Sneezes)

B: Bless you. Have you got a cold?

A: No.
B: Neither have I. Have you been here long?
A: No.
B: Neither have I. Do you come here often?
A: No.
B: Neither do I. Do you like it here?
A: No.
B: Neither do I. Are you from this town?
A: No.
B: Neither am I. Are you interested in the birds?
A: No.
B: Neither am I. Have you finished with your newspaper?

Scene 2. Enter girl 1

Girl 1: Hello, darling.
A: You're late.
Girl 1: Am I?
A: Yes, you should have been here an hour ago.
Girl 1: Should I?
A: Yes, you agreed to meet me at seven o'clock.
Girl 1: Did I?
A: Yes, but you always arrive late.
Girl 1: Do I?
A: Am I, should I, did I, do I? What's wrong with you? I've had enough of this. (Hurries off; the girl sits down in his place with a sigh)

Scene 3. Enter girl 2

Girl 2: Ah! There you are!
B: (Gets up) Hello, darling.
Girl 2: You're late.
B: Am I?
Girl 2: Yes, you should have been here an hour ago.
B: Should I?
Girl 2: Yes, you agreed to meet me at seven o'clock.
B: Did I?
Girl 2: Yes, but you always arrive late.
B: Do I?
Girl 2: Am I, should I, did I, do I? What's wrong with you? I've had enough of this (Hurries off; B sits down with a sigh. Notices Girl 1 and moves timidly closer.)

Scene 4

B: Hello. My name's Englebert.
Girl 1: You have a funny name.
B: Have I? What's yours?
Girl 1: My name's Emma.
B: You have a beautiful name.
Girl 1: Have I?
B: You come here every Saturday, don't you?
Girl 1: Do I?

B: Yes, and you arrived late last Saturday, too, didn't you?

Girl 1: Did I? You know a lot about me.

B: Do I? I know you have beautiful blue eyes.

Girl 1: Have I? (Moves closer) You've got brown eyes, haven't you?

B. Have I?

Girl 1: Yes, and I like men with brown eyes.

B: Oh, do you? And I like girls with beautiful blue eyes.

Girl 1: Do you?

B: I say, I'm hungry.

Girl 1: Are you? So am I.

B. Let's go and have something to eat.

Girl 1: Oh, what a good idea!

(They go off hand in hand)