



DRAMA AND STORY-TELLING WORKSHOP

Play it by Ear is a Christian drama company which seeks to equip the local church to use drama in worship. We believe that people connect with stories and that drama is a brilliant medium for speaking truth into people's lives. We seek to help churches by performing at events, running drama workshops and providing scripts.

Today we are going to look at how drama can be a really useful tool for youth and children's work and look at some of the different ways that we write and perform drama in church.

Six Simple Steps to Performing a Good Drama.

1. Ask Questions?

If you have decided (or been asked) to perform a drama at a service or event, make sure you ask the important questions;

- What sort of drama do you want? (monologue, funny, mime, etc)
- What age is the audience (children, adults, mixed, etc)
- What is it being performed at? (Family service, youth event, etc)
- How long do you want it to be?
- How big is the performance area?
- What are the technical facilities? (are there microphones, lights etc available?)

2. Give yourself time! – Don't leave rehearsals to the last minute, everyone will be much more confident if the drama is prepared well in advance.

3. Choose the actors – This can be tricky but one of the keys is to get enthusiastic volunteers who want to be involved and encourage them to develop their skills by doing dramas like this.

4. Rehearse! – Make sure you give plenty of time to rehearsals and do a dress rehearsal with microphones (if you're using them) in the space where you will be performing the drama

5. Sort out the little stuff (costumes, props, etc) – Get these sorted early so the cast can rehearse with them and be used to them by the time the performance comes

6. Talk to the Technical Team – Make sure you talk to whoever is in charge of technical equipment early so you know what's available and definitely don't spring it on them the day before the performance

Top Three Tips for Writing

TELL THE STORY CLEARLY: Often when people are writing they can get caught up in being really funny or clever and end up producing a drama/story which is a bit muddled. Focus on being clear and the other stuff usually sorts itself out

STAY BIBLICAL: When we write a drama, we are obviously going to flavour it with our own personality and theology. That is okay, it's a very natural thing to do and a brilliant way of helping people look at Bible stories and see truths they had never considered. It's important to tell the story creatively but you also need to make sure when you are writing a drama based on the Bible and that you aren't twisting the text to fit your needs. Your drama should aim to reflect the messages of the story rather than distorting the messages. It is really important to pray before writing and ask that God will help you creatively convey His message.

GET A WRITING PARTNER: It is hard to look at a piece you have written in an objective fashion. Therefore, it is really helpful to have an individual (or a group of people) to whom you can send dramas and get honest and constructive feedback. It is very rare for something to be right on the first draft, so it's really important to learn not to get defensive over criticism.

Top Three Tips for Performing

LEARN YOUR LINES: It can be boring but the more you know your lines, the more confident you will be on stage and the more confident you are on stage, the easier it is to produce a really good performance.

SPEAK CLEARLY: There is no point doing a great accent if no-one can understand you. The key to it all is speaking slowly and not rushing through your lines, if you feel like you are already speaking slowly then you can probably afford to slow down a little more again.

REHEARSE, REHEARSE, REHEARSE: Rehearse as much as you can, preferably in the venue in which you are going to be performing. The more you rehearse the better the chemistry there will be between the characters and the easier it will be to vary the tempo of the drama and find ways to express the nuances of the piece.

Contact details

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