
Disappearing Baby

*A workshop for students in the
LGA3104 Plays and Drama for
Young Learners course at
IPGKDRI, 2013.*

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Introduction

Students in the LGA3104 Plays and Drama for Young Learners (PISMP Semester 5) course have already practised adapting a children's story into a play.

For the purposes of this workshop, the simplified story "Disappearing Baby", by Ruth Wickham, has been adapted into a children's play. The adaptation is available in Appendix 1 of this module.

The students have asked to see a demonstration of teaching drama to children, as Language Arts is a new addition to Primary School English in the KSSR syllabus. This workshop is in response to that request. However, the following possibilities are being considered ahead of the workshop:

- We are unsure how these children will react to an unknown teacher, especially a foreigner, and it's possible that they may just 'freeze'.
- Hearing English spoken by a native English speaker may surprise the children who have only ever had Malaysian teachers.
- Having observers in the room hopefully will not prove a distraction because these children are in the 'Teaching School' and have been subjects of 'Micro-teaching' sessions with IPG students in the past.

With such a short session only a few examples can be demonstrated, and the normal steps of a lesson will not be strictly adhered to – and normally these might be done over a series of lessons.

Objectives

Workshop participants (IPG students, IPG lecturers and Primary School Teachers) will:

- Investigate a play adapted from a children's story book ("Roly Poly Baby").
- Consider possible teaching points from the story and play.
- Observe drama activities that lead up to the performance of the play by the children.
- Discuss strategies and activities.

KSSR Learning Standards. The children will be:

4.1.2 Able to recite jazz chants and poems with correct pronunciation, rhythm and intonation.

4.2.1 Able to respond to a) characters b) place with guidance.

4.3.2 Able to perform with guidance based on: a) jazz chants b) poems c) stories.

Materials Required

- A suitable room (the school library or multimedia room) with space for a class of children as well as about IPG 20 students observing.
- A class of primary school students, and their teacher.
- Participants need to have a copy of this module.
- Visual Aids for vocabulary. (pictures and/or realia)

Timing

The workshop is a 2-hour session.

The first part of the session is a briefing for the observers (IPG students). In the second part the children will be involved in the Language Arts lesson.

Procedures

Briefing for Participants

The participants will be reminded of following points:

1. Story Adaptation

Writers are familiar with the important rule of good writing: "Show, don't tell". This is why, when writing the adaptation, the use of a Narrator has been avoided. A narrator is often included (especially in children's plays) to cover parts of the story that cannot be simply told through speech and action, and sometimes as a means to shorten and simplify the story.

In Reader's Theatre the narrator part is often split into several parts to give different children a turn at reading. However, as a general rule, using a narrator causes the play to slow down and it can become boring.

If the story comes from a book, not every description, word and action in the book needs to be included in the play. Most of the descriptions can be shown in the actors' movements and words. The characters can talk in the play more than they do in the story.

2. This is a **Language Arts** lesson, not a Reading lesson. Some children find reading difficult, and being asked to read can greatly reduce their enjoyment of the lesson and hence their language learning. Therefore, as much as possible, the necessity to read has been avoided in this lesson plan.

3. In the first part of the lesson, the children will be presented with vocabulary they need to understand enough to enjoy the story and the play, including not only nouns but also verbs, adjectives and related expressions.

4. There is a strong emphasis on correct pronunciation, rhythm and expression in speech, including some use of body language. This is a very important part of Language Arts.



5. Children get to practice at least some of the lines in a group or with the whole class – this is a safe way to improve pronunciation to avoid problems of ‘shyness’ and the fear of being heard to be incorrect. More confident children will be eager to take lead, individual parts. Children should be (firmly and) gently encouraged, but not forced into a situation where they feel foolish or embarrassed. However, every child should be participating at least at one point.
6. All materials and props need to be prepared ahead of time and be at hand.
7. The children do not need to understand every word in the story or play, and they don’t need to understand every word the teacher says. It is important for the teacher to keep the children’s attention, to speak clearly, and to use visual aids, actions and expression to make sure the children understand enough to enjoy the lesson. The teacher will know whether they are understanding sufficiently by the expression on their faces and their reactions to commands (rather than “do you understand?”) which may indicate that something needs to be repeated or restated. The children do not need explanations in Bahasa Melayu.

Language Arts Lesson – Before Learning the Play

Before telling the story or working through the play, the children must be familiar with the most important vocabulary. It is important to remember that they do not necessarily need to know every single word. Pictures, realia and actions are used to help the children understand the words.

Vocabulary

Disappear

Teacher plays a memory game with the children. A number of objects / pictures are shown to them, and they have time to memorise them, and then the tray / pictures are hidden and one / some removed. Children have to guess or remember which ones have vanished or disappeared. The game can be played several times. All the time the word “disappear(ed)” / “appear” is used in context.

Motorbikes, Buses and Cars

Teacher talks with the children about motorbikes, if any of them have/ride one, can they mimic the noise etc. Teacher plays ‘Get on the bike’ game with children. Children walk around the room until the teacher calls one of these:

‘[number] people get on the bike!’ Children have to quickly form motorbikes (single file, in a line) and make vroom noises to cross a line. Children who don’t form a team are out (for now).

‘[number] people get in the car!’ Children have to quickly form cars (driver + passenger in front, 1/2/3 in back seat) and make vroom noises to cross a line. Children who don’t form a team are out (for now).

‘everyone get on the bus!’ All of the children have to quickly form buses (double line) and make vroom noises to cross a line.

Bumpy, dusty, scary, noisy, squished up

Children learn and perform the following jazz chant. First, practise with appropriate actions, just copying and echoing. Once they know the sequence, perform it as a call-and-response with one group/the leader saying the odd numbered lines (1, 3, 5, 7, 9), and the other group saying the even numbered lines.

* * * *

(1) LEADER: Riding on the motorbike,
CLASS: Riding on the motorbike,

* * * *

(2) LEADER: Sitting on the back,
CLASS: Sitting on the back,

* * * *

(3) LEADER: Hold on tight!
CLASS: Hold on tight!

* * * *

(4) LEADER: Squish up close!
CLASS: Squish up close!

* * * * * * * *

(5) LEADER: Road is very bumpy, [*bump, bump, bump*]
CLASS: Road is very bumpy, [*bump, bump, bump*]

* * * * * * * *

(6) LEADER: Road is very dusty, [*cough, cough, cough*]
CLASS: Road is very dusty, [*cough, cough, cough*]

* * * * * * * *

(7) LEADER: Cars are very noisy, [*vroom, vroom, vroom*]
CLASS: Cars are very noisy, [*vroom, vroom, vroom*]

* * * * * * *

(8) LEADER: It's very scary, [*I'm so scared!*]
CLASS: It's very scary, [*I'm so scared!*]

* * * * * * *

(9) LEADER: It's OK, we're here now.
CLASS: It's OK, we're here now. [*phew!*]

* * * *

(10) LEADER: Get off the bike.
CLASS: Get off the bike.



Jazz chants are spoken with a strong 4-beat (per line) rhythm. Children are encouraged to click fingers, clap, stamp and/or move to the beat. The * indicates the beats. Sometimes the beat occurs where there are no words. (The first of the four beats is stronger than the others.)

Spider

Teacher makes sure the children know the word 'spider'. They probably know "Incy Wincy Spider" – revise (/learn) with actions.

Children learn "There's a Spider on the Floor" (tune 'If you're happy and you know it') with actions.

There's a spider on the floor, on the floor.
There's a spider on the floor, on the floor.
Who could ask for any more, than a spider on the floor.
There's a spider on the floor, on the floor.

Now the spider's on my leg, on my leg. ...
Oh, I wish I had some Raid for this spider on my leg! ...

Now the spider's on my chest, on my chest! ...
Oh, I'd squish him in my vest, if it didn't make a mess! ...

Now the spider's on my neck, on my neck! ...
Oh, I'm gonna be a wreck, I've got a spider on my neck! ...

Now the spider's on my face, on my face! ...
Oh, what a big disgrace, I've got a spider on my face! ...

Now the spider's on my head, on my head! ...
Oh, I wish that he were dead. I've got a spider on my head! ...

SPOKEN: "But he jumped off..." [*start back at the beginning*]

Hate

Teacher talks about how a spider makes you feel. Ask if any children like/hate spiders. If possible, children name other insects and bugs. Teacher chooses bug names and creates a Vocabulary chant.

NOTE: There should be three words – 2-syllables, 3-syllables and 1-syllable.
Arrange the words: 2-3-1, 2-3-1, 2-3-2-3, 2-3-1. Use a 4-beat (per line) pattern. *For example:*

* * * *
spiders, mosquitoes, flies!
* * * *
spiders, mosquitoes, flies!
* * * *
spiders, mosquitoes, spiders, mosquitoes
* * * *
spiders, mosquitoes, flies!



Teacher says these lines with interesting (exaggerated) intonation, and asks the children to copy. (Use same bug names as vocabulary chant, if they are different.)

I ha-a-a-a-a-a-ate spiders! (*lengthen, rising tone, falling on spiders. Use hand action to emphasise rise.*)

I HATE mosque-i-i-i-i-i-toes! (*shout and clap on HATE, lengthen 'I' on mosquitoes while tracing imaginary mosquito path with finger.*)

I hate hate hate hate fli-i-i-i-i-i-es! (*rapid fire with finger point on 'hate hate hate hate', falling then rising on 'flies'*)

Individuals and/or groups might like to perform to the whole class.

Like a Teddy Bear

Teacher demonstrates to students – if they don't know it – the little rhyme that is often said to babies while playing on their hand.

Round and round the garden
 Like a teddy bear (*running finger around on baby's palm*)
 One step, two steps (*'walking' fingers up the baby's arm*)
 and tickle under there! (*tickle baby*).

- Children could practice poem with a partner's hand.
- Children could make the poem into a little dance.

Language Arts Lesson - Telling the Story

The children are told (or read) the whole story, stopping to discuss important points along the way.

The story can be told using a 'Big Book' containing only the pictures from the story with a few simple sentences. (Remember, this is not specifically a 'reading' lesson.)

A Big Book has been created for this story using only a picture on each page. As the pages are turned the teacher can read the lines from the page facing.

Children can be invited as the story is told to demonstrate how a baby rolls over.

Language Arts Lesson - Starting the Play

The play could be used as "Reader's Theatre" in a reading lesson, and/or eventually produced as a full play for an audience of parents. There are some steps that can be moved through to start preparing the children for a production.

Initially, children can be given small cameo parts to play. These can be played by individuals in a group, or by groups saying parts as in choral speaking. This gives an opportunity to practise saying the lines in a safe environment.

Cameo 1: Alya, Azlinda and Syakira talk about the baby.

In this little conversation, the three girls talk about baby Alif. The Alya character should try to demonstrate Alif's smile and laugh, and his actions when he reaches out to hold something.

SYAKIRA: How is your baby brother?
 ALYA: He is very cute.
 AZLINDA: Can you play with him?
 ALYA: He can smile! And he can laugh!
 SYAKIRA: Can he do anything?
 ALYA: He can hold things.

In this short cameo, Alya and Azlinda notice (with surprise) that Alif has turned over.

ALYA: *(turns around)* Wow! How did you do that?
 AZLINDA: He can turn over!
 ALYA: I didn't know.

Try saying the conversation replacing the "he can turn over" with other abilities. For example:

- He can walk!
- He can fly!
- He can read!
- He can drive a car!

Language Arts Lesson - The Whole Play

If there is still time – or at a later opportunity – the children could read through the play aloud, those without parts could just watch and/or follow in their scripts.

- Divide the children into groups of eight. Give every child a part and read through the play.
- Work through the play section by section asking different groups to try saying/reading and acting short parts.
- When children are reading as they act, get them to read the sentence or phrase to themselves first, and then look up and say it out loud.
- As soon as possible children should be acting without a paper in their hands.

Appendix 1 – Playscript

Cast

ALYA – a 9 year old Malaysian girl.
 NAZMI – her big brother
 ALIF – her baby brother, about 3 months old
 MUM
 DAD
 GRANDMA
 SYAKIRA – Alya’s best friend at school
 AZLINDA – another school friend

Scene 1- outside the school

Mum, Alya and Nazmi arrive at the school on a motorbike. Syakira, Azlinda, and other students are standing around.

NAZMI: *(getting off bike)* Thanks Mum. See you later, Alya. *(runs off)*

ALYA: *(climbing off bike)* Bye, Mum.

SYAKIRA: Hi, Alya.

AZLINDA: Hello Alya.

SYAKIRA: Do you like riding on the back of the motorbike?

ALYA: No. Nazmi squishes me.

SYAKIRA: How is your baby brother?

ALYA: He is very cute.

AZLINDA: Can you play with him?

ALYA: He can smile!

And he can laugh!

SYAKIRA: Can he do anything?

ALYA: He can hold things.

Scene 2 – in the kitchen / living room

In the kitchen at home. Mum is busy preparing food. Alya is helping by trying to hold baby Alif. Dad and Nazmi enter.

DAD: Nazmi and I are going out to do some work.

NAZMI: I can help Dad now.

MUM: Baby Alif can’t walk yet.

ALYA: But he is strong.

MUM: Be careful, Alya. Hold Alif carefully.

ALYA: Hold still Alif!

There is a knock at the door.

ALYA: It’s Syakira and Azlinda.

MUM: Come in, Syakira and Azlinda. Welcome.

Syakira and Azlinda enter.



SYAKIRA: Hello everyone.

AZLINDA: Good morning.

SYAKIRA: Hi, Alif!

AZLINDA: Alif you are very big now. *(pinches Alif's cheeks)*

MUM: *(holds her hands out to Alif)* Come here, Alif.

Alya, get his rug. He can lie on the floor for a while.

ALYA: On him on the floor?

MUM: Not on the floor, on his rug.

Alya leaves to get Alif's rug. Mum puts Alif on his rug, lying on his back. The 3 girls sit close.

SYAKIRA: What can he play

AZLINDA: Babies like songs, don't they?

ALYA: He likes "Like a Teddy Bear".

SYAKIRA: I don't know that one.

ALYA: *(picks up Alif's hand)* Round and round the garden, like a teddy bear. One step, two step, and tickle under there ...! *(tickles Alif, and he giggles)*

AZLINDA: We could sing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star".

The three girls sing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star", and Alif waves and gurgles.

Suddenly the phone rings. Mum quickly wipes her hands and picks up the phone.

MUM: Hello? Yes ... what? ... oh no! That's bad! ... I'm coming.

Mum puts phone down and looks at Alya, Syakira, Azlinda and Alif.

ALYA: What's the matter?

MUM: Grandma fell down. I must go and help her.

ALYA: Can I come too?

MUM: You and your friends can look after Alif. OK?

AZLINDA: We can do that.

MUM: Talk to him. Play with him.

ALYA: Is Grandma OK?

MUM: Grandma is okay.

I will be back soon.

Dad will be home soon too.

ALYA: OK Mum. I'll be ok. We will be okay.

Mum leaves. Alya and the girls sing "Incy Wincy Spider" to Alif.

Suddenly Syakira sees a spider on the floor creeping towards them.

SYAKIRA: Look! A spider on the floor.

AZLINDA: Oh no! I hate spiders. Let's catch it.

ALYA: Put it outside.

The girls catch the spider, and throw it outside.

Meanwhile, while no one is watching, Alif turns over onto his stomach and lifts himself up to watch.



ALYA: *(turns around)* Wow! How did you do that?

AZLINDA: He can turn over!

ALYA: I didn't know.

The phone rings. Alya runs across to answer. The other two girls turn to watch her.

ALYA: Hello? Yes, Mum. ... Grandma is ok? ... See you soon.

Meanwhile Alif rolls over a couple more times and disappears under/behind the sofa. They turn back, and Alif is gone. They stand and stare in disbelief.

ALYA: Azlinda, where's Alif?

AZLINDA: I don't know.

SYAKIRA: Where is he?

ALYA: He can't walk. He can't crawl.

AZLINDA: So where is he?

The girls start walking around looking for him, calling his name.

ALYA: I can hear him! Where is he?

The door opens and Mum comes in, she is helping Grandma who has a bandage on her arm. While the girls are staring at Mum and Grandma, Alif rolls back onto his rug.

ALYA: Alif! Where did you go?

AZLINDA: We were worried!

MUM: Did Alif go somewhere?

ALYA: Grandma! Are you OK? *(runs to hug grandma)*

Dad and Nazmi enter. Everyone turns to them. Alif rolls away again.

ALYA: Dad!

DAD: Hello, Alya, are you OK?

NAZMI: Hello everyone. But – where is Alif?

The three girls look at each other in surprise.

SYAKIRA: He has disappeared ... again!

MUM and GRANDMA: Again??

NAZMI: Where is my baby brother?

ALYA: *(going over to where Alif was and looking under/behind the sofa.)* Alif can roll over now.

GRANDMA: Alya, Your mum liked to roll away too.





I remember the first time she rolled away and disappeared.

DAD: Let's eat these cakes I brought home

Everyone sits down and Mum and Grandma make some tea.

Alif rolls back and forth on the floor smiling and gurgling at everyone.

Appendix 2: Story

<p><small>Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Dato' Razali Ismail</small></p> <h1>Disappearing Baby</h1> <p><i>A Story for Malaysian Kids (simplified)</i></p> <p>By Ruth Wickham, Brighton Education Training Fellow at IPGKDRI</p> 	<p><small>Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham</small></p> <h3>Disappearing Baby</h3> <p>Alya and Nazmi climbed off the motorbike.</p> <p>"Thanks Mum. See you later, Alya," said Nazmi. He ran to meet his friends.</p> <p>"Bye, Mum," said Alya.</p>  <p>2</p>
<p><small>Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham</small></p>  <p>"Hi, Alya," said her friend Syakira.</p> <p>"Hello, Alya," said Azlinda.</p> <p>"Do you like riding on the back of the motorbike?" asked Syakira.</p> <p>3</p>	<p><small>Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham</small></p> <p>"No. Nazmi squishes me," said Alya.</p> <p>"How is your baby brother?" asked Azlinda. Alya smiled. "He is very cute!"</p> <p>"Can you play with him?" asked Azlinda.</p> <p>"He can smile. He can laugh. I can play with him."</p> <p>"But can he do anything?" asked Syakira.</p> <p>"Yes. He can hold things," said Alya.</p>  <p>4</p>

Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham

On the weekend Mum was in the kitchen cooking.
Alya was holding Alif.



Alif was wriggling a lot. He was a strong baby.
Dad and Nazmi went out to do some work.
Syakira and Azlinda came to see Alya. Alya got
Alif's rug. Mum put Alif on his rug on the floor.

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Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham



"What can he play?" asked Syakira.
"Babies like songs, don't they?" asked Azlinda.
"He likes 'Like a Teddy Bear'. Do you know it?"
said Alya.
The girls didn't know it, so Alya showed them.



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Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham

The girls sang "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"
together. Alif like that too.

Then the phone rang. Mum answered.

Grandma fell down at her house. Mum had to go
and see her. The three girls had to look after Alif.



Alya was worried about Grandma. "Is she ok?"
"Grandma is ok. I will be back soon. Dad will be
home soon too," said Mum.
The girls sat down and sang a song to Alif. They
sang "Incy Wincy Spider" and did the actions.

7





Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham

Syakira saw a spider on the floor.



"I hate spiders," said Azlinda. "Let's catch it."
They caught the spider in a box. "Put it outside,"
said Alya.
The girls put the spider outside the door. They
came back to play with Alif.

8

<p><i>Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham</i></p> <p>Alif had turned over to watch them.</p>  <p>"Alif, how did you do that?" said Alya. "He can turn over!" said Azlinda. "I didn't know," said Alya.</p> <p>The phone rang. Alya answered. Mum told her that Grandma was ok. Mum said she was coming home now.</p> <p>9</p>	<p><i>Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham</i></p> <p>Alif rolled over and over and disappeared behind the sofa.</p> <p>The three girls went back to play with Alif. He had disappeared.</p>  <p>"Azlinda, where's Alif?" asked Alya. "I don't know," said Azlinda "Where is he?" asked Syakira. Alya was thinking. "He can't walk. He can't crawl." "So where is he?" asked Azlinda. "Alif! Alif!" called Alya. "I can hear him ..."</p> <p>10</p>
<p><i>Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham</i></p> <p>Then Mum came in the door. She was helping Grandma. Grandma had a bandage on her arm. "Mum! Grandma!" cried Alya. She hugged them both.</p> <p>Alif rolled back onto his rug. Alya saw him. "Alif! Where did you go?" "We were worried!" said Azlinda. "Did Alif go somewhere?" asked Mum.</p> <p>Just then Dad and Nazmi came in the door. "Dad!" said Alya. "Hello, Alya. Are you OK?" said Dad.</p>  <p>"Hi, everyone. Where is Alif?" asked Nazmi.</p> <p>11</p>	<p><i>Disappearing Baby, (simplified) by Ruth Wickham</i></p> <p>The girls looked surprised. "He has gone again!" said Syakira "Again?" said Mum and Grandma together. "Where is my baby brother?" asked Nazmi again.</p> <p>Alya went and looked behind the sofa. "Alif can roll over now," she said. "Your mum liked to roll away when she was a baby," said Grandma.</p>  <p>"Let's eat these cakes I brought home," said Dad.</p> <p>12</p>