

# Evacuees Taster ©The Drama Studio

## EVACUEES 1

### 1. Family Groups - Setting Up The Improvisation Using Tableaux

Whether you have done the Air Raid lesson or not a good starting point is a family tableau having emerged from a shelter to confront the damage after a raid.

Discuss with the group what it would be like in an air raid. The people would seek the relative safety of the shelters. They would be fearful and would wonder what they might find after the raid.

Ask the students to make family groupings (groups of 4/5).

Give them a few minutes to establish their characters and talk together about them.

Explain that as it is wartime some family members may not be present. Others will have taken their roles.

Tell the students that the families will emerge from their shelters to discover what has happened to their homes.

You can allow them to decide on the fate of their own house during the raid but I actually prefer to slip each family a piece of paper stating what they find so that the families have differing predicaments for later on in the drama.

**This also embeds reading within the drama.**

Here are three possible scenarios but you can obviously add more or just duplicate these three and see if the different groups have a different take on things even although they are in exactly the same situation as another family!

**There is a Scenarios File included in Word that you can photocopy from for these scenarios to hand out to the groups.**

#### Scenario 1

Your house has been damaged but most of it is still standing. Others have not been so lucky. Friends and other families have lost their homes and some people are badly hurt. Mother is very worried about her children.

The children's tiny garden hideout lies in total ruins!

#### Scenario 2

Your house has been completely demolished. A small doll lies on the rubble dropped there by a child in the rush to get to the shelter.

Where will you live now? Will family and friends help you? Right next door to you another family's house is completely in tact. How can this be? It seems so unfair.

### **Scenario 3**

Your house is completely in tact, which is amazing because right next door another family's house has been completely demolished.

It seems to make no sense that your property has been spared. You may well feel a sense of guilt! Looking around you can see others not so well off as you!

### **Making Tableaux**

Ask the groups to consider their predicaments and then to create a family group tableau which shows their reactions as they first see the situation outside.

Once they have created the tableaux tell everyone to freeze still.

Now ask them to think about how they feel right now.

Tell them you are going to ask some family members what their thoughts are.

You can do this as a thought-tracking exercise, tapping someone on the shoulder as a signal for that person to speak his/her thoughts aloud.  
(If you have done the Air Raid lesson the class will be good at this by now).

By keeping the reactions minimalist and almost staged, this adds to the intensity of the drama of this first section and really sets the scene for a powerful lesson rather than just letting everyone interact right away.

Once you have done this with a few individuals ask the family group members to think of one sentence each to describe their feelings and then to practise saying this sentence in turn within their groups.

When the groups have run through the tableaux and added in their comments they are ready **to show the rest of the class.**

**\*You do not need a large space for the tableaux this can easily be done in a classroom setting.**

### **Class Discussion**

Now as a class you can discuss the various situations people are in and how the neighbours will begin to interact, each family having different problems.

Suggest also that the planes might come again to tonight and tomorrow the lucky ones might not be so lucky.

Drop into the discussion the emerging parent's concern for the welfare of their children - the symbolism of the little doll, the devastated hide-out for example brings this into sharp focus.

For more WW2 Lessons click the link below:

<https://www.thedramastudio.com/store/category/38-world-war-two>