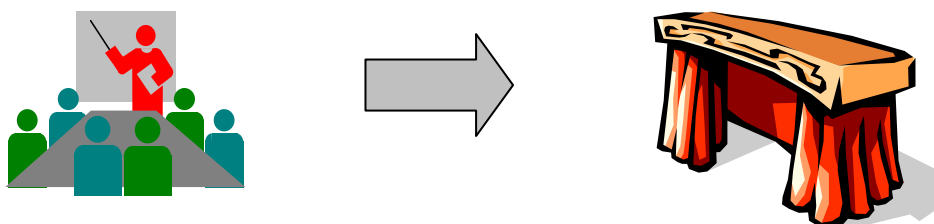


# Turn the classroom into a stage!



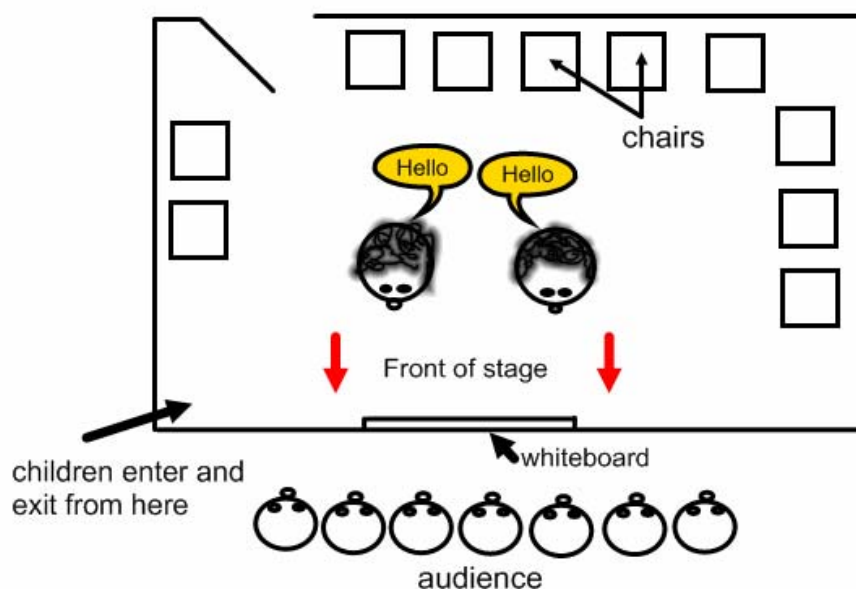
You can make the whole experience of doing the play much more exciting by treating the classroom as a stage and getting the children to enter, move around and exit just like they would in a *real* play. Make a big thing of it!

“Ok boys and girls, I know you’re only in Year 1 but we are going to try to do this like professionals do it, like real grown ups would in a real play. What do you think? Shall we try to do this like a real play?”

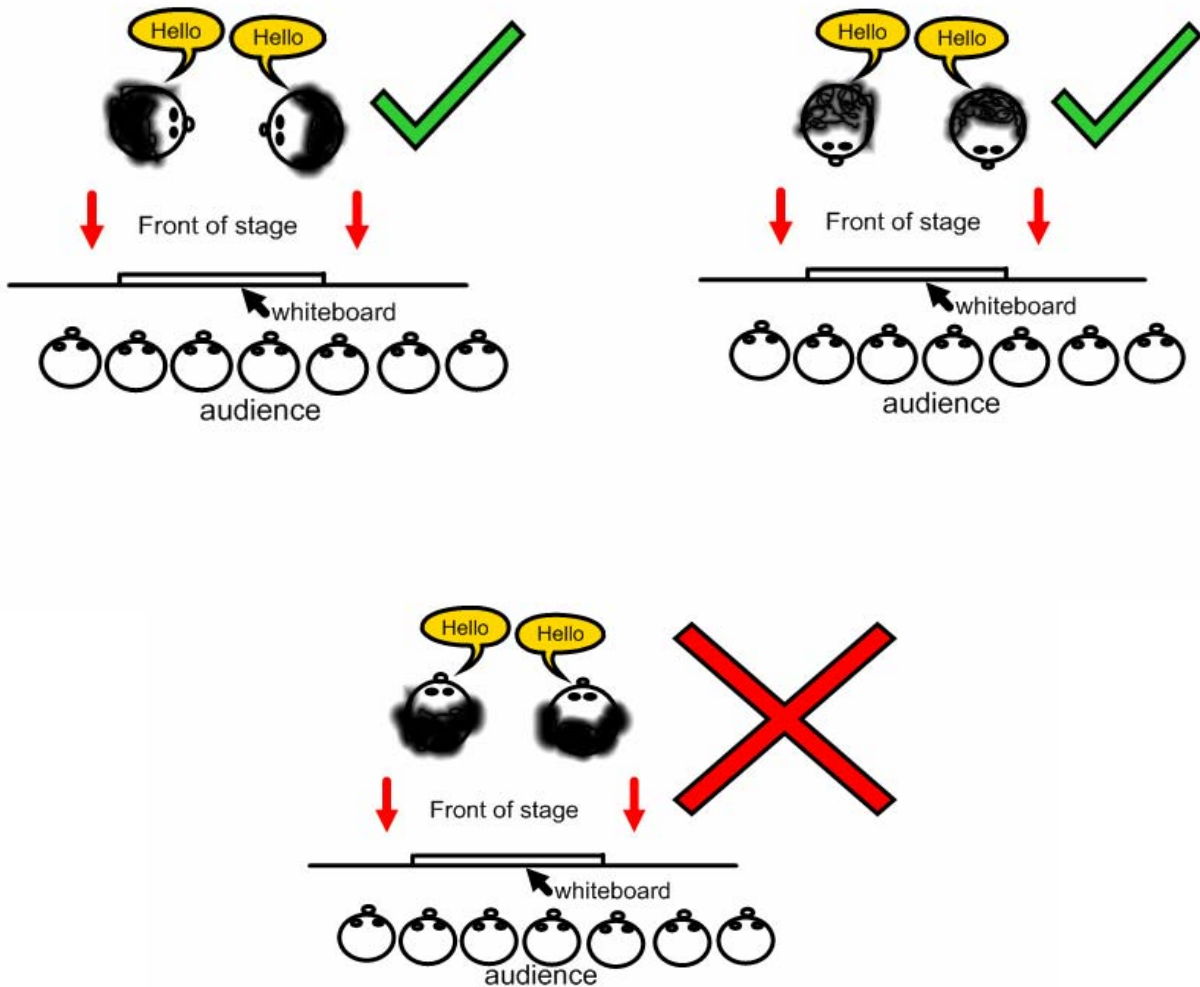
I have found that this simple technique (trick?) always creates an incredible amount of excitement and, more importantly, *motivation*. The children take it far more seriously. This does not detract from the fun or enjoyment. On the contrary, my experience has been that by taking it that much more seriously they do a far better job, and they very soon realise how well they are doing it. They become proud of themselves. This becomes the source of their enjoyment.

But how *do* you turn a classroom into a stage?

This is in fact very simple. First decide which wall is the front of the stage, for example, where the whiteboard is. The children have to image that as they look at the whiteboard they are facing the audience. They enter and exit from one corner.



Explain that when they are talking, they must not have their backs to the audience, i.e. they must not have their backs to the whiteboard.



I always begin with an empty stage, with all the children crammed into the corner. They then “enter” at the appropriate time and move to the centre of stage. Likewise, they exit by returning to the corner. To give it a sense of realism, at the start they all wait in the corner until I shout “action!”

## Thinking about putting on a show?

You can just invite the parents to come and see a show in your classroom. But if you have the luxury of a bigger space to use for the show, but maybe somewhere where you can't go to practice very often, then getting the children used to entering and exiting in the class will make a huge difference to a performance. If you are going to perform the play somewhere else, think about where they will need to enter from (left or right?) and do the same in the classroom. With all the shows I have ever done, we have only ever had one rehearsal on the actual stage. I can testify to the fact that if the children get used to imagining the stage and exactly where they enter and exit from, they find it easy to translate this knowledge to the stage. Trust me, it works!