



jim burns

general editor

**uncommon
dramas, skits
& sketches**

CD-ROM INCLUDED



leader's
resource

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introduction

I love great drama. It often communicates a point much more effectively than the spoken word. There are times as a Christian speaker that a drama or sketch has been presented just before I went on to speak and I almost didn't need to give my message because the drama spoke volumes to our hearts.

Christine Stanfield is a great writer of dramas and an excellent actor. She wrote many of the sketches in the drama section, and I am honored that she would allow the youth worker community to use her material. You'll see right away that her material causes students to think. Often her material is funny, but just as often it has a bite to it. Most importantly, her dramas get kids to think about eternal messages.

My friend and fellow youth worker, Joel Lusz, compiled the wild and crazy skit section. Joel did an incredible job of bringing some of the finest loony skits together in this volume. At HomeWord and the HomeWord Center for Youth and Family at Azusa Pacific University, youth workers kept asking us where to find just plain ol' fun-and-nonsense skits for youth groups, retreats and camps and for the lighter moments of youth ministry. Joel has been in youth work for many years and this is his collection of personal favorites. After reading through this section, they have rapidly become my favorites as well.

One of the great highlights of youth work in this generation is more student hands-on involvement. With this volume of dramas and skits, you have the opportunity to get your students who like drama more involved in hands-on ministry. Thanks for your influence in the lives of students and their families.

Jim Burns, Ph.D.
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a few essential tips

adapt

Read the material, and then ask yourself, *How can I use this with my group? What should I add? What should I take away? How can it be adapted for our group?* In other words, change it to fit your students. Change the language. Update the material. Use the right props and costumes. Adjust. Alter. Tailor-make. Custom-fit. Modify. Adapt!

use props and costumes

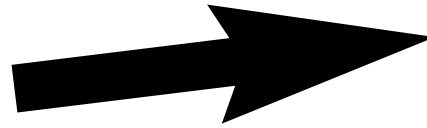
Budget some money for buying costuming paraphernalia: dresses, hats, boots, jackets, purses, wigs, oversized clothes, telephones, musical instruments, drums, eyeglasses, sports equipment, and so forth. Ask church members to donate discards or leftovers from garage sales. Ninety percent of the success of a skit rests with the costuming and props. One year, I took \$200 out of our youth ministry budget and went thrift shopping. My first stop was the thrift store. After that, I hit garage sales, 99 cent stores, any place with cheap stuff. You'd be amazed at how many good skit props you can buy at places like that with little money. If you're going to do a cowboy skit, get cowboy hats, boots, holsters, vests and whatever else. Make it more real, yet outrageous. Something about putting on costumes helps students loosen up and get into the spirit of the fun.

swallow your pride

If you can't be a fool for Christ, then whose fool are you? Go ahead and put on the makeup, get hit in the face with a pie, put mustard under your arms. Who cares?! This is how walls are broken down and relationships are built. Set an example of fun for your students. Go for it!

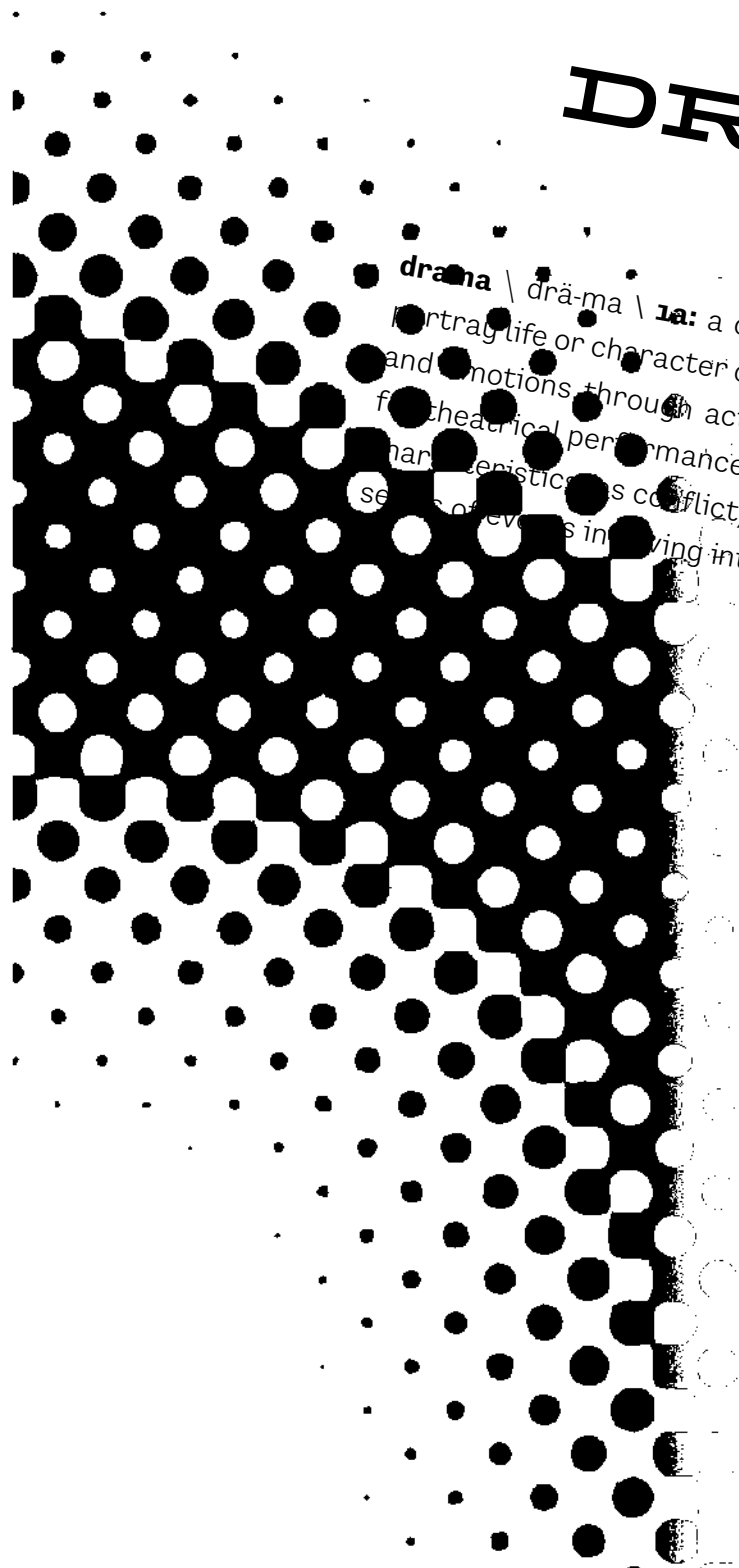
keep a record

Have you ever wondered if you have already done a skit or played a game or given a message to the group you're meeting with today? Us too. We have tried to make record keeping as simple and convenient as possible. Next to each activity, message or skit you use, write the date and with which group it was used. You can also jot down notes for new ideas or suggestions for adaptations or improvements.



DRAMAS

drama \ drā-ma \ **1a:** a composition in verse or prose intended to portray life or character or to tell a story usually involving conflicts and emotions through action and dialogue and typically designed for theatrical performance **b:** a movie or television production with narrative characteristics **2:** a state, situation or series of events involving interesting or intense conflict of forces.



dramas



Drama can be used to present a serious message or simply to entertain. It can help bring a lesson to life. In our media-oriented society, we need not be shy about using drama to enhance a message.

Drama can be a great icebreaker. A short skit can be performed before, during or after a sermon or lesson. It can be used at seminars, camps, Sunday School, and as a ministry outreach—in missions, soup kitchens, nursing homes and hospitals.

Dramas can bring a sense of reality to a lesson, appealing to several of the senses and to both the visual and audio learners. Youth workers, preachers, teachers and speakers can make references to something the group has experienced in common through a dramatization—a slice of life.

If you have the luxury of having a director, seasoned actors and a stage, you are indeed fortunate. If not, here are some guidelines:

1. Have your actors memorize their scripts whenever possible. If time does not allow, have the actors at least be as familiar as possible with the script. In this case, for the performance have the scripts in less obvious places—in a newspaper, a book, a magazine, on a desk or table. The actors should look down, “pick up” a line, and “say” it to the other actor, rather than reading it off the page.
2. Have appropriate props—even if they’re minimal—such as a chair, a table, a briefcase, a skateboard, and so on.
3. Rehearsal is important—even if it’s only a readers’ theater performance. Give the “actors” at least a couple of minutes to read through the script before “acting” it out.

These three elements will add a sense of reality to the sketch as well as indicate respect for the audience.

eternity placement



topics

Seeking God; salvation; making eternal choices

key verses

Matthew 6:33; 7:7; Luke 11:9; 12:31

cast

Meg, an Eternity Placement counselor

Ted, a seeker

A passerby, disheveled and beaten up

props

A table, two chairs (one on each side of the table), some books (sitting on the table)

scene

The Eternity Placement office.

Meg: Hello. I'm Meg, your Eternity Placement counselor.
(Extends hand to Ted.)

Ted: *(Shakes hands with her.)* Nice to meet you. I'm Ted.

Meg: So, you're looking for a religion? *(Both sit down.)*

Ted: Yeah, I feel like there's something missing in my life.

Meg: *(Trying not to be too obvious, she is reading from the job training manual.)* I know what you mean. I just started working here recently. I haven't made a decision yet on which religion I'll go with; I'm still looking. But I know you've come to the right place. We won't try to influence your decision—we'll just inform you of your options. Tell me a little about yourself first so I can get a feel for the direction you seem to be headed.

Ted: I'm successful in school and my personal life is okay, but I still feel like there's something missing. I know



lots of people, but they're all into different things, and very few of them are really content. I'm not sure which way to go.

Meg:

Do you have any religious background at all?

Ted:

When I was younger, my parents were into this real strict religious deal. Everything was considered bad. I looked at their "Don't" list and it was my "Goals-in-Life" list. So I rebelled big time. I wasn't about to do the every-Sunday thing. It wasn't long before my parents quit going to church, too. But now I really feel like there's an empty spot inside that needs to be filled.

Meg:

I can relate to that. (*Looking through a "Religions of the World" manual, trying to appear as normal as possible.*) Now would you be interested in a multiple-god deal or a one-God program?

Ted:

I think I'll stick with one. More than one sounds too complicated.

Meg:

Okay, that eliminates a number of them right off the bat. Do you want a position of involvement in the religion?

Ted:

Like what?

Meg:

We have a guru in Oregon who runs a religious nudist colony. He's lacking a few nude waiters and bus-people for his *au naturel* restaurant.

Ted:

Uh . . . I'm definitely not interested in *that* kind of involvement.

Meg:

Does the colony concept interest you at all?

Ted:

No.

Meg:

Well, how do you feel about religious rituals and the wearing or not wearing of clothes particular to a certain group?

Ted:

Not interested. I would like to keep this as normal as possible.

Meg:

Well, we are certainly narrowing the field now. How about one of the many new-age groups? Lots of variety here. We have the god-is-everything plan, the self-contained and always popular you-are-god plan, and the god-can-be-whomever-or-whatever-you-want-him-or-her-to-be plan.

Ted:

No, thanks.

Meg: Well now, it does offer reincarnation possibilities. You could return as anything from a penguin to a hibiscus. But, it doesn't appear that the choice is yours.

Ted: That sounds totally lame. *(Person walks through the room, looking really weird and/or totally thrashed.)*

Ted: What happened to him [or her]?

Meg: He [or she] got into a cult that didn't work out for him [or her]. He's [or she's] back looking at some other options.

Ted: Do you have anything on plain old Christianity?

Meg: It doesn't look very exciting.

Ted: That's okay. I'm not looking for excitement. I'm looking for peace.

Meg: It says here that one of the faith's major tenants is grace.

Ted: Grace, huh?

Meg: My guess is she's a large lady who rents office space at their headquarters. She must be an excellent tenant for them to mention her in their description.

Ted: I think they're talking about a different kind of tenant [tenet]. A camp counselor tried to explain grace to me once—something about undeserved favor from God. I wasn't ready to hear it then. It sounded too simple and too good to be true. I think I'm ready to hear about it now. I'm at least going to check it out. Thanks for your time.

Meg: No problem. Say, if you find out how we can get inner peace, let me know, will you?

Ted: Sure will. Bye.

Meg: Goodbye, and have a nice day!

