



Exploring Kinetic Theatre: Key Terms

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Glossary of Key Terms (Alphabetical Order)

B

Body Awareness

Understanding how the body moves and exists in space—essential in movement-based theatrical practices.

Body Language (Movement)

Non-verbal communication through posture, facial expressions, movement, and spatial dynamics to convey thoughts, emotions, intentions, and stories in performance.

C

Conflict and Resolution (in Improvisation)

Narrative elements where characters face challenges (conflict) and work toward solutions (resolution), foundational to dramatic storytelling.

Creative Composition

The process of arranging movement, music, and expression into a structured or improvised theatrical scene.

D

Dance

Rhythmic movement patterns used to express and tell stories, arising naturally in Kinetic Theatre.

Dynamic Sequences

Evolving patterns of movement responding to music or narrative impulses, without fixed choreography.

E

Educator's Role

The responsibilities of a teacher or facilitator in guiding, inspiring, and structuring Kinetic Theatre experiences for students. In Kinetic Theatre, the educator facilitates learning through imaginative prompts, supportive guidance, and age-appropriate structure.

Embodied Learning

An educational approach where knowledge and emotions are explored and understood through physical movement and sensation.

Emotional Regulation

The ability to manage and express/respond to emotional experiences appropriately, supported by embodied exploration in Kinetic Theatre.

Environmental Sounds

Non-musical sounds from surroundings or objects (e.g., rustling paper, tapping wood), used expressively in performance.

Expressive Thinking

A creative process in which individuals use movement and symbolic forms to convey ideas, emotions, and narratives.

F

Fantasy Play

Imaginative play involving fictional or fantastical scenarios, often using invented roles, characters, and environments.

Fine Motor Skills

Small, precise movements (e.g., hand gestures, facial expressions) refined through detailed expressive work in theatre.

G

Gesture

A physical movement, such as a hand (or a head) motion, used to communicate an idea, feeling, or character in Kinetic Theatre

Gross Motor Skills

Large-body movements (e.g., walking, jumping, balancing) developed through physical theatre activities.

H

Holistic Development

The comprehensive growth of a child across physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and creative domains. Kinetic Theatre engages the whole child.

I

Improvisation

Spontaneous, unscripted creation of scenes, characters, and movement in performance, encouraging creativity, responsiveness, and emotional expression.

K

Kinetic Theatre

A theatrical form centered on physical movement and expression, minimizing spoken dialogue and emphasizing the body as the main expressive tool. It uses the body as the primary tool for storytelling.

M

Movement-Sound Interaction

The use of motion to create or respond to sounds, often involving objects or body percussion (clapping, stomping, etc.).

Musical Improvisation

Spontaneous creation of music or sound that interacts with performers' movement, often used in Kinetic Theatre.

N

Narrative Skills/Expression

The ability to create, structure, and tell—verbally or non-verbally—stories, often developed through gestures, improvisation, role-play, and performance.

Non-Verbal Communication

Conveying meaning through body language, facial expression, and movement without speech.

P

Physical Expression

Communicating thoughts or emotions using the body, rather than (or in addition to) speech.

R

Role Play

A type of theatrical or pretend play where individuals act out roles or scenarios to explore emotions, social situations, or narratives.

S

Sensory Experience

Engagement of the senses—particularly touch, sight, and sound—as a means of experiencing or understanding a performance.

Socio-Dramatic Play

Collaborative pretend play involving real-life social scenarios (like family, school), aiming to explore interpersonal dynamics and practice empathy, often emphasizing cooperation and shared storytelling.

Spatial Levels

Different vertical positions of the body in space (high, medium, low), used to vary movement and explore meaning in Kinetic Theatre.

Symbolic Play

Play in which one object or action stands in for another (e.g., a stick becomes a sword), enhancing abstract thinking and imagination.

T

Theatre

A collective and creative art form that involves performance, storytelling, and collaboration. In education, it helps children develop social, emotional, and communicative skills.

Theatrical Play

A form of play that merges theatre techniques with creative, unstructured play, fostering emotional, cognitive, motor, and linguistic development.

V

Verbal Communication

Use of spoken language in performance, including clarity, tone, and articulation.

W

Warm-Up

Initial physical or mental activities in a session that prepare participants for expressive work and build group cohesion.