

Reading and interpreting in the theatre method

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Since the beginning of the twentieth century, theatre has become an increasingly accessible course of study in general culture. Although there are some reflections of this trend in the Israeli national religious education system as well, the full potential of theatre methods has not yet been realized. This paper suggests some of the many possibilities that theater offers as an educational tool that can be utilized in a wide range of academic disciplines, and considers the ways learning materials can be adapted and dramatized, making them more accessible and attractive to students and enhancing their pedagogical effect. Some basic aspects of the theater arts and the tools it employs are discussed in conjunction with the methods in which texts of various forms can be integrated in the theatrical event. The dynamics of improvisation in monologue, dialogue, and wider discourse are explored, with attention to their potential applications as part of classroom learning, and to the cognitive and psychological benefits these various forms of improvisation offer. Various roles that the teacher can play while introducing theatre methods into the classroom are suggested. Additional benefits are highlighted as well, including the development of imagination, creativity, dynamic thought processes, relaxation, and improvement of speaking skills.