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A conceptual analysis of the role of play as an educational and therapeuric tool in a Johannesburg primary school setting

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research is my own unaided work. It is being submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Dramatic Arts to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination to any other university

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Kudakwashe Chitambire

……day of ……2009

ABSTRACT

This research conducts a theoretical analysis of structured dramatic play in a primary school classroom situation using available literature on play, child psychology, education, drama in education and trauma in relation to socio-cultural realities in present day South Africa. It argues that play has the potential to prevent and reduce the levels of violence and trauma, fostering holistic learning that is the implicit philosophy of Outcomes Based Education (OBE).

The study posits that dramatic play has the potential to equip a learner with the knowledge, skills, abilities and emotional preparedness and healing to deal with difficult life circumstances. The research does not call for the introduction of play as a subject in the primary school curriculum rather, since play is a process, many of its activities provide opportunities for learning through the already present subject disciplines.

This study concludes that dramatic play has an integrated educational and therapeutic capacity to serve the needs of the current South African primary school context.

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to all educators the world over for their devotion to the profession and unwavering endurance in the face of insurmountable odds.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DoE: Department of Education

EI: Emotional Intelligence

IQ: Intelligence Quotient

MI: Multiple Intelligences

OBE: Outcomes Based Education

RNCS: Revised National Curriculum Statement

SAPS: South African Police Service

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

NOTE

For ease of reading and gender impartiality, the study refers to the educator as ‘she’ and the child or learner is referred to as ‘he’.