

# THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM

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In this article we describe in fine detail a mantle of the expert scenario that we have found can be engaging for both Juniors and Infants. Our aim is describe the sequence of steps that introduces children into the imaginary world of mountain rescue. We hope it will be of interest to both teachers who are new to the mantle of the expert approach and those who have more experience in using dramatic-inquiry. The article includes our own commentary as well as the following:

- The purpose and function of each step
- Commentary from other classroom teachers who have tried out these scenarios in their classrooms
- Teaching tips in shaded boxes
- Cross references to other parts of this book
- Links to the website for video clips, digital stills, additional information, and resources

The scenario, with the accompanying commentaries, is not intended as a recipe to be rigidly followed but rather as a carefully written guide based on our own, and other teachers', classroom experiences. Our intention is to support you in getting you started using MoE. You can follow the guide as closely or as loosely as you like. We've tried to write it as generically as possible while recognizing that every classroom and every day is different.

We recommend, if you can, that you work with a colleague so that you can try out the scenario in each other's classrooms, reflect together on what happened, and plan each session collaboratively. At the end of this article we have included sequence steps and planning grid, to use as notes and support you during the lesson.

We have divided the scenario into different phases each of which is comprised of a sequence of steps, or teaching moves. We suggest if at all possible that you follow each sequence and don't split steps between sessions. You could plan on trying out one phase at a time across several days or you could plan on working on more than one, or all phases, in a single classroom session. You could think of the scenario as a 'mantle of the expert in an afternoon'. Though it is possible to complete the whole scenario in about 90 minutes we strongly encourage you to follow the energy of the children. If they want to spend more (or less) time than you've allotted, if possible follow their lead.

To help with the process of facilitation we've include introductory remarks and commentary on why we suggest you make certain moves. In addition we've changed the font and highlighted words in the following ways:

- Text inside boxes explains or interprets the details or the purpose of particular steps and teaching moves. [Sometimes it's written inside square brackets]
- *Text written in italics is language you could use with the children as yourself, outside an imagined world of e.g. mountain rescuers*

- ***Text written in bold italics is language you could use that you speak 'in role' i.e. as if you are someone else inside an imagined world of e.g. as a mountain rescuer***

## MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM SCENARIO

In effect, you are going to 'write' a story with the children and with the assistance of a colleague about how a mountain rescue team rescued a climber who needed help. Rather than just tell the story in the everyday world of the classroom you are also all going to enact it in the imagined world of mountain rescuers. You, or the children, can 'read' the unfolding story at any time by retelling what has happened. You, or the children, can also literally write down parts of the story at any time.

Before you begin you need to do the following:

- Invite a teacher colleague to work with you (we'll refer to her as Mrs Green **A1** on the planning grid). Alternatively you might consider a supportive parent or an LSA. You may want to offer to find a cushion for her to sit on!
- Read through this scenario together in advance. Decide on how many phases you intend to follow at one time. You might want to write notes for yourselves on index cards.
- Before you begin Phase 1, make your own drawing of a red blob like the one in the photograph and put it in a bag (see Figure 1).
- Set up a white board (or chart paper) with marker pens and create a space (preferably with carpet) on the floor where you can sit with the children.
- Gather additional resources if you intend to continue with subsequent phases (see below)



Fig. 1

### Phase 1: Introducing the problem

Gather the group together on the floor (if at all possible sitting on a carpet) by a white board (or chart paper).

#### Step 1: Imagining what's not actually there

This step gathers the class together, focuses them, and encourages children's productive use of imagination.

When you have their attention then the group are ready. Although it may be bad for your knees! if you kneel with the children on the carpet, you'll be making it clear that you are all going to be in the work together.

*I've got something here I'd like you to take a look at, something we could use in making up a story together. I drew it really quickly so it's not a work of art or anything. [You can slowly take the drawing of the blob out of a bag and hold it up]. Just have a look and see what you think, it might remind you of something. Of course it might not. It might not remind you of anything at all, you might say 'I don't know... nothing!' And that would be fine. But if it does remind you of something could you let the rest of us know. Does anyone already*

*have an idea? There's no need to put up your hand, I'll come round to everyone. If you've got something in your mind could you please tell us, even if someone else has already said it, and if you can't think of anything then say: 'nothing'. I'll start here and we'll come round. [You should accept whatever the children say, you don't need to say much, but if you do, be authentic and treat every idea with the same respect. You could add supportive comments like 'I'd not thought of that' or 'Um, interesting I could imagine that in a story, if it was a red cloud'.]*

Purposes:

- This task takes the children's attention off themselves, reassures them, and puts them at ease.
- Inviting the children to share what the drawing of the blob reminds them off sets a tone of how you will be working together. You are clearly not expecting 'right' answers. You're not asking guess-what's-in-the-teachers-mind sort of questions. Rather, you are inviting their honest responses and showing them that in imagination there can be many right answers depending on the situation.
- As they use their imagination you accept whatever they imagine. The children have to do little beyond looking and seeing what's not actually there: first an object and then a situation.

Teacher functions:

- Affirm the children's ideas by accepting that the blob could be what each child's individual child imagines.

You can accept whatever ideas children come up with without any evaluative comments. It's better not to say 'good' or 'excellent' so that they don't feel that you are the arbiter of what is good about their ideas. Rather, their ideas are all possibilities that in different scenarios could set us off in a different direction. One student saw the blob as a blood cell containing a deadly virus, which set us off creating a scenario involving scientists on a secret island.

## **Step 2: Using social imagination to see a person in another time and space**

This step introduces the other adult who will represent an injured climber in the shared imaginary world of mountain rescuers.

You need to have decided in advance where the other adult is going to sit. You want a place that makes a triangle between you, the children, and her. Not close enough to touch but not far enough away to feel distant.

Your colleague does not have to dress as if she has been mountaineering though it helps if she looks a bit bundled up. She could wear an article of clothing that could be worn on a mountain e.g. a coat or a hat and gloves.

- *If you look over there, Mrs Green is here to help us out. She is going to imagine, for a short while, that she is someone else, someone in a story. She is going to walk over there and sit down. Here she comes. Now at the moment she is still just Mrs Green but the moment she sits down she is also going to be someone in a story. [As the adult sits, holding one of her legs, she immediately looks concerned and starts to rub her leg, wincing in pain.] Have a look at what's happening... what do you notice? [Give the children a few moments to think and reply.]*

- [Then hold up the picture of the blob] *How do you think this might fit into the story?*  
[Walk over, or better still, if one of the children volunteers, a child walks over to put the blob near or under the twisted knee. ] *Does this change things?*

**Purposes:**

- You introduce another task that keeps the children's focus off themselves.
- You begin to use social imagination to see the same imagined person and situation and begin to establish an agreed upon history of the person

**Teacher functions:**

- You verbally introduce them to a drama convention: as themselves they can look 'into' an imagined world if they can see the adult as if she is another person in a fictional situation.

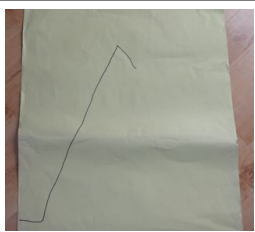
**Other adult's function:**

- To represent a person in another time and space that, you hope, becomes the object of the children's concern.

**Step 3: Narrating how the climber came to be where s/he is**

This step uses story-telling and drawing to create the story of what happened to the climber. As I narrate, at the same time I draw the setting and key events on the whiteboard.

You can either use similar words to those written below or if you feel comfortable doing so you can ask children to fill in some details with questions like, 'And how strong do you think the wind was the next morning?' With the infant class we worked with they wanted a snowmobile instead of the helicopter that all other classes have wanted.

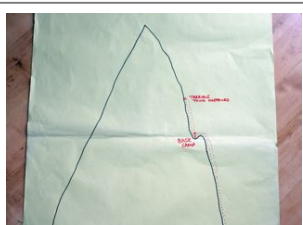


1. *I'd like to tell you a little bit more about what's happened in this story and how this person ended up in this terrible position... [Using the whiteboard, you start to draw slowly, narrating at the same time.] I'm just going to draw on here, something about what's happened. You might recognise something as I draw. [You draw a mountain – see picture left].*



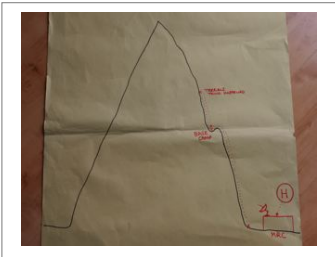
2. *This climber started out here, at the bottom of the mountain. She wasn't on her own, she had a companion and they were both experienced climbers. They had all the right equipment and everything. They started out in the morning, climbing up here. Everything went well. There were no problems and the weather was good. By the end of the first day they had reached this point on the mountain. [You draw a dotted line and a cross – see illustration]*

*They set up tent and camped overnight, without incident. But overnight the weather took a turn for the worse and when they woke up the next morning a storm had blown-in overnight, it was snowing heavily, and the wind was gusting to gale force.*



3. *The two climbers had a row arguing over whether it was safe to carry on or whether they should turn back. They couldn't agree. The other climber left, saying it was too dangerous and that she was going back. However, this climber decided to carry on.*

*Now, I don't know how many times we've told people not to climb up the mountain on their own. Some people just don't listen to good advice... Anyway this climber continued to climb and did OK despite the awful wind until the terrible thing happened. [Pause here and see if the children fill in the gaps] She was climbing up this steep face when she lost her footing, slipped, and crashed down. And this is where she is now. She's stuck in a place where it is going to be really difficult to get to, and she's injured and alone with daylight slipping away... [Another pause for reflection, questions etc.]*



*4. Now, there is something else I haven't drawn yet, its the building at the bottom of the mountain. [See illustration] On the roof of this building is one of these... [see illustration of antenna] and one of these... [See illustration of helipad]. Who do you think might work in this building? [You might not get mountain rescue centre, but don't worry. Their suggestions are likely to be in the same arena: hospital, police etc] Do you know what that H is used for? [landing a helicopter]*

Purposes:

- This task again keeps the children's focus off themselves.
- The story-telling and drawing combines with their social imagination to create a fixed history and the current situation for the person that they continue to see (in imagination) sitting on the mountain

Teacher functions:

- You continue to invent the imagined world but now through the familiar convention of story-telling and drawing an illustration

Other adult's function:

- She becomes like an illustration in the story that you narrate

#### **Step 4: Using social imagination to enter into the imagined world**

The final step in this phase involves a sequence of moves that will support the group into shifting from being observers of the person in the story to talking as if they are also in the story world.

1. *Let's just take another look at the climber. What do you think are her options? What could she do? [One of the suggestions is likely to be to use a mobile phone or a walkie-talkie to get help. But don't worry if they don't...]*
2. *Ok, lets see what she does... [The adult/climber reaches into her actual pocket to take out an imaginary mobile phone] What number do you think she is likely to dial? Could I ask one of you just to walk behind the climber and see if you can see the number... Who might she be calling using that number? [This suggestion is likely to be a 999 call to the emergency services or to a rescue centre. But, again, don't worry if they don't. One child, asked to do this, lent over the climbers shoulder, watched carefully and confidently announced – 222!]*
3. *Now, when I answer the call [pick up an imaginary phone & put it slowly to your ear] then I'm also going to imagine that I'm in the story, as a person who answers the phone in cases of emergencies. Is that OK? Here we go... **Mountain rescue, can I help you?** [There follows a brief conversation between the teacher/rescue worker and the adult/climber who gives a few details of what's happened using information from the story as previously narrated. There is no need to ask too many questions.]*

4. ***I see, please hold, I'm going to talk to my colleagues...*** [With a hand over the phone] ***what else should I ask her?***
5. You relay the first question or two from the children until you feel it is the right moment to pass on the phone. When a child seems ready to speak ask her or him, ***Would you to speak to her directly? Here you can take the phone.*** [Pass the imagined phone. As other children want to speak they can pass the imagined phone on from one to another as they talk to the adult/climber. You can find out details of where she is and how difficult it might be to get to her. Questions are likely to revolve around where she is, keeping warm, etc. you might want to introduce the tension of the phone battery running low, but not out, just yet!]
6. When the children who want to have had a chance to ask their questions or when the momentum begins to drop you take back the phone. ***We'll be with you as soon as we can... We've got your number and we will ring you back as soon as we've worked out our plans ...***

Purposes:

- You introduce a task that invites the children to begin to actively carry the story forward
- Adults and as many children as possible begin to interact (using social imagination) as if we are in the 'now and imminent time' of the mountain rescuers' world.

Teacher and other adult's functions:

- You introduce the children to another drama convention. By imagining to hold mobile phones we talk to each other as if we are both people in the story world. Those children who talk to you (as a rescuer), or who take and use the phone to talk to your colleague (as the person up the mountain), all step into the imagined world.

In our experience a few children may feel embarrassed when you begin to talk as if you are a mountain rescuer (especially if they are older children who think that playing is only for little kids). It's really important that you talk using your normal voice. It's also important not to put anyone 'on the spot' by giving them the phone. If someone giggles, stop immediately. Affirm gently that you can understand why people might giggle. Ask the whole class if they can agree to treat this seriously because you can't go on unless they try not to laugh. Say you won't ask them to do anything that they don't want to do. And start again.

Momentum during this part of the scenario is essential. You don't want it to become a tortured Q&A, where everyone 'gets a go' and the situation loses all sense of urgency.

## Phase 2: Rescue Plans

You may need to rearrange the room now so that those children who want to can work in groups at tables or on the floor. You'll need to have large sheets of paper and marker pens available.

For Step 2 you'll need to invite another colleague to work with you in the role of a reporter. We'll call him Mr Green (A2 in the planning grid). He'll need a notebook and pen. Alternatively, Mrs Brown could take on this role. If she does you'll need to put something in place to represent the climber for the time being, perhaps a coat and a rucksack next to the pool of blood. Remember to check in with the children so they know what's going on.

## Step 1: Group planning on paper

These next moves follow on directly from the conversation with the climber.

1. ***Before we do anything, we're going to have to have a plan. However bad it is up there we're can't go risking peoples lives unless we are sure we know what we're doing. She does seem to be in a very difficult place to get to, especially in this terrible weather. We're probably going to need most of our specialist equipment, what do you think?*** [Listen to suggestions from the children regarding equipment. Take out a piece of paper and start making a list, with the younger ones draw a quick picture (to remind you) and write next to it. Once the suggestions start coming, quick change track] ***Look I can't keep up with this, grab a piece of paper*** [indicate stack of sugar paper already prepared] ***and start your own list. You might want to work in groups.***
2. [Things might start off a bit slow, as some of the children try to make sense of what's happening. Some will pick it up much quicker than others. Walk round as they work and call out things you see being added] ***Team don't forget to add the winch, we're going to need one of those. And the ropes and the first aid kit...*** [With the younger ones you might want to encourage them to write if they are only drawing] ***Team, can I please ask you to write the name of the things you're drawing next to the pictures, it'll help us out when we're getting the equipment together.***
3. [As they start to finish encourage them to start working on their plans] ***Team if you're finishing your equipment list, can you please start working on your plans. You might want to flip over your paper and use the other side...***




As they work on their equipment lists and plans some children/team members may want to continue to talk to your colleague/the climber by cell phone. Of course this will only be possible if she is still the climber!

You could introduce another drama convention: if you provide pieces of paper they can write and receive text messages. You will initially (as 'yourself' and not as a team member) have to show them how to do this.

As you observe the children at work you can assess the situation. Ask yourself the following questions:

- ◆ How much are particular children are leading?
- ◆ How much adult leadership and guidance do they seem to need?
- ◆ How much authority should I take on as a team member?

In addition to facilitating and mediating as yourself you can also do so from inside the imaginary world 'in role' talking as one of the mountain rescue team. Within any role you can position yourself with three possible levels of authority depending on how much direction you think the children need as a team, in particular small groups, or as individuals.

<p><b>Higher authority</b> relative to the children/team – position yourself as if you are the Rescue Commander</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>You now have the authority (within the fictional space) to give directions and make reasonable demands on the children (as team members)</p>	<p><b>Equal authority</b> relative to children/team members –</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>position yourself as if you are one of the team.</p> <p>You are able to be a colleague (within the fictional space)</p>	<p>You are now able to position them to take more responsibility (within the fictional space)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>
		<p><b>Lower authority</b> relative to children/team members – position yourself as if you are a helper or someone who is new to the team and doesn't understand much</p>

An equal authority position (as colleague) should be your default position. That allows you to listen and talk with interest but without having to control.

As necessary you can take on a higher position of authority (as Commander) but only with those groups that need it and only for as long as the children need you to support their learning in the particular task they're doing. Some people/groups may need very little support at all, some may be struggling to get started, and others might be confused or worried. As soon as they no longer seem to need to be directed you can step back, observe again, and consider positioning yourself with a different level of authority when you next interact.

Alternatively, with children that you assess need to be supported into leaning less on you or others for their ideas, you can always switch to taking on a position of lower authority (as a helper or someone who's new to the team). The less you say you know the more they have to take on authority and thus responsibility.

The following are examples of the kinds of things you might say during this step:

Teacher/Rescue Commander (higher authority than children/mountain rescue team – most children seem to need support):

***I'm going to need to see the plans as soon as they are ready.***

***You'll need to include a list of all the equipment you are going to need...***

***I've got to take a look over here for a moment, but when I come back I'll need to see how you are going to lift the climber off the mountain...***

Teacher/one of the team (equal authority with rest of the team– only some children seem to need support):

***Can you show us your plans? Ah, you're right we're going to need a stretcher. (To everyone) We're going to need a stretcher, can you please make sure you have a stretcher on your list.***

***Can you please make a note, next to your pictures? That will help us a lot. Doesn't have to be spelt right, just a note to remind us so we don't forget things...***

Teacher/a helper or newcomer (lower authority relative to those children who are ready to take on authority within the team):

***Can I help you? Is there anything you need?***

***I'm sorry I don't understand this, can you please explain to me how this works?***

Purpose:

- This task allows the children to apply their imaginations within the scenario that has been introduced to collaboratively create possible ways to rescue the trapped climber. It also gives them time to think, discuss ideas, process thoughts and create possibilities. One group of juniors we worked with spent two hours on this step, drafting and redrafting their plans. As they worked, they became more and more engaged in the scenario making meaning and taking ownership.

Teacher/team member function:

You facilitate and support the children as they work together (both as 'yourself' and with the flexible authority of different team members)

- Organising people
- Fetching materials
- Focusing and giving direction
- Providing deadlines
- Asking for clarification
- Linking ideas between individuals and groups
- Communicating information
- Increasing the volume of a child's idea in a group.
- Sharing and spreading ideas from one group to another

When children work in groups we suggest that as much as possible you use self-selected groups based on particular children's interests. Because MoE is inquiry-based, most activities like those in everyday life are already differentiated by task.

If necessary you can always mediate:

- if someone seems unhappy being on their own
- if groups seem to be too unwieldy
- if children are arguing over resources

## **Step 2: Articulating and sharing ideas to adult/reporter**

As the children/team's plans begin to take shape, this step gives them an opportunity to articulate and share ideas within their small groups. For this step you need to use another adult (or your colleague who now shifts her role from climber to reporter) to talk with the children as if s/he is a reporter from the press or television.

If you have no available colleague rather than omitting this step you might consider taking on this role yourself. It's a bit trickier to negotiate. All you really have to do is add '... and I'm going to be the reporter now when I pick up this [imaginary] microphone'

***I'm sorry to stop you, I know you're busy. But there's a reporter outside from the paper. He's heard about the climber and wants to do a story on what's happened and what our plans are. I wondered if you could spare a bit of time to talk to him. Does anyone have any questions or concerns about that?*** [At this point you might talk with a small group of children (or if appropriate with the whole group) to deal with any questions about e.g. not being exploitative in reporting. Any concerns they have should be transformed into an agreement that they want the reporter to make e.g. that he'll only take photographs with permission.] ***He's promised to not get in your way as you're working, but if you could just let him know why you're doing what you're doing that would be very helpful. Thank you.***

The adult/reporter (A2), carrying a notebook and pen, respectfully interviews each group, making careful notes and observations. He asks factual questions about what they are going as well as interpretative questions about why they are doing this. He needs to summarize what he's been told.

Purpose:

- This task creates possibilities for the children/team members to clarify and extend their ideas
- Within groups ideas can also circulate more effectively so that one person's ideas may influence another's

Teacher/team member function:

- To facilitate the children/team being interviewed (and if necessary to mediate their concerns)

Adult/reporter function:

- To position the children/team members to explain what they are doing and to interpret it in terms of the appropriateness of the plans for the purpose of rescuing the climber
- To summarize the plans

### **Step 3: Hearing a summary of the plans**

This step allows the children to hear a summary being read of their own and others' plans. They both observe an adult writing a summary and can revise what is being written.

The adult/reporter needs to sit down on a chair. It's as if he is in his newspaper/television office typing a draft of his story into a computer. He does not need an actual computer just an imagined one. He has to be ready to read his summary notes and pretend to type. The story need not be perfect or 'finished' and in fact it's better if it's clearly a draft. It's good for children to see adults 'struggling' with writing, changing their mind and trying out other ways of saying things.

During this step you introduce two more drama conventions:

1. The children can overhear the adult/reporter orally composing his story for the newspaper/television (as if typing on his computer in another place – his office).

2. The children/team members can comment and the adult/reporter will hear their comments and revise what he writes (but they do not talk to him because it is as if he has remembered these ideas)

***Team, can I please ask you to stop for a moment?***

***Thank you. I know you're busy, but if I could please ask you to look over here, just for a moment, there is something I think we should know about. Over here in his office is the newspaper reporter after he's finished interviewing us. He's just about to type in his story for the newspaper/television station that he works for. We can't talk to him right now but let's imagine that we can listen in as he's writing.***

[He begins to type in his story]. Let's stop time there for a moment [the reporter stops typing]. *Is there anything you'd like to add or change? Listen again as he continues and if you want to add on or change anything that he says, just say 'Stop' and we can stop time again.*

[The reporter begins again, stops if anyone says 'Stop']. ***What did you want to add or change? What do you think he's forgotten or been confused about?*** [The reporter revises his story to incorporate whatever is said, as if he's remembered these details].

Purpose:

- This task puts the children in the position of hearing an adult synthesize their work
- Also being in a position of being able to critique and amend what the adult says

Teacher/team member function:

- To facilitate the reading of the summaries and their revision

Adult/reporter function:

- To summarize what the children say.
- To revise by incorporating comments

**EXTENSION POSSIBILITY.** If you are not looking to complete this scenario in 90 minutes, then an exciting and worthwhile extension is to build the rescue vehicle and medical centre. We've tried this out a number of times and it can add significant opportunities for the children to invent and invest further in the work.

### **Phase 3: The First Aid course**

Completing the sequence of steps in this phase before enacting the rescue will deepen the learning now and later. Phase 1 introduced the desperate situation of the injured climber. In Phase 2 the children developed their rescue plans. Now in Phase 3 the children add on a medical framework to the mostly technical viewpoint they've just been developing. So when the rescue team enact reaching the climber they will be thinking about how needing to save her life will make a difference to how they should physically move her.

#### **Step 1: Shifting back in time in the story world**

The initial step requires careful negotiation in order to maintain coherence for the children. The first aid course has to be experienced in the rescue team's past because it wouldn't make sense for the rescuers to be taking a first aid course as they are preparing for an

urgent rescue! Like any shift in time and space in MoE this one must be agreed with the children outside the imagined world.

*Before we go any further in our story there is something we need to do. It's a bit tricky because it means going back in time into the rescue team's past.*

*When we reach the climber we're going to need to use first aid, would you agree? But the team can't have the first aid training now, at this time in the story because it would take too long. So, it makes sense for us to imagine an earlier time when we were all learning the first aid techniques that we will now need up that mountain. Would you agree?*

Stopping the narrative drive that propels children forward with a desire to rescue the climber in order to shift back in time may be a jarring idea for some younger children. You may find quickly drawing a time line will help explain it. You might also find it useful to talk about flashbacks in films as an example of how stories need not be told in a linear way.

Once you're sure the children understand that in the story world you are about to shift back in time then you can re-enter the imagined world to start the training.

Purpose:

- This task shifts the children to an earlier time in the story world to learn something that will be needed later

Teacher function:

- To negotiate the time shift

### **Step 2: Using a child volunteer**

In this step you provide a focus for the class by using a child volunteer in a very protected way. All that s/he has to do is lie still.

*1. If we can make a circle over here we can get started. [Gather the children together] Thank you.*

*2. We're going to need a volunteer, someone who can pretend to be badly hurt and unconscious. It'll have to be someone who knows they can lie still for a long time, with their eyes closed and not react when there are things going on around them. [Choose someone you think is not going to giggle]. Thank you.*

*3. Can you please lie down here in the centre of the circle. Make yourself comfortable. We'd like you to pretend that you were climbing a mountain, have fallen badly, and are now unconscious. Now in a moment we would like you to help us to imagine this as much as we can, so please don't react to the things we do. We'll all do the best we can to help you with that, by not giggling at you or doing anything you don't like. If you need to tell us what we're doing is making it hard for you then lift your arm like this? Are you OK with that? [Deal with any concerns that the child may have and don't go on until everyone has agreed to help her be serious]. Fine, then lets get started.*

*4. Could you choose where you'd like to imagine you have been hurt if you'd fallen and then move your body to suggest to us where you might be injured*

Purpose:

- To introduce a child/volunteer who will remind the children of the stranded climber and brings a measure of everyday reality to the imagined event of first aid training.

Teacher function:

- To negotiate with the child volunteer to make sure s/he agrees to participate in this way

Child/volunteer function:

- The child provides a human focus for the next activity

### **Step 3: Beginning the training session**

In this step the children/team members focus on the first steps to take when administering First Aid

**1. Welcome to this training session. I know that some of you have already had some first aid training. In this session we're going to apply what we know to what needs to be done in emergency cases when we don't have much time and we want to be sure that we've done all we can to save a person's life.**

**2. I'd like to thank this volunteer who's going to help us out today. Of course, she's not actually fallen but if we all imagine that she has been injured in the mountains we'll be able to think about how we should best treat her. OK?** [If necessary talk as yourself to explain again to anyone who's confused that everyone is imagining that they're in a first aid training session].

**3. We don't know how badly injured s/he is or even how the accident happened. All we can rely on is what we already know as well as what we can see and hear. What do you see that looks unusual? [They will comment on a twisted leg or arm etc. and may comment on her breathing] **So what does that suggest to you about how she might be injured?** [They will suggest a broken leg or arm etc.] **And what do you hear?** [Make sure they listen without any noise. They will notice breathing. If not, then ask the children if they can hear her/his breathing. They may also notice some other noise that the child is making like rasping breath.] **So what does that suggest to you about her vital signs – if s/he's alive or not?** [If they don't point out that she's alive and not dead then point that out.]. **Of course she might still be alive even if you couldn't hear or see her breathing, especially when you're trying to determine her medical state on a mountain with the wind blowing like it is today.****

**4. So, just to recap, we've tried to find out the person's vital signs – are they alive or not – as well as where they might be injured. Which do you think we should do first? Which is more important?** [If they don't all agree that checking for vital signs is more important, ask someone who did to explain why.] **I'm just going to write that down over here so that we can remember that.**

[Write down on the white board or chart paper:

A. Check for vital signs: listen for breathing

B. Check for possible injuries: look for physical signs].

**And we do both of those before we touch or move the person.**

**5. Now can you please have a quick chat with the person next you about what you think we should do next ...**

[The children will come up with suggestions that you can discuss and evaluate].

You should adapt the text in italics (the language that you could use in the classroom) for your particular class. Younger children may need some simpler words though in general we have found that young children cope well with adult vocabulary like 'vital signs' provided you contextualize it (as you do by using it in reference to a person being medically treated) and sometimes add additional explanatory words (like '... if s/he's alive or not'). Older children may enjoy even more erudite language.

Purpose:

- To focus on the first steps to take when administering First Aid Teacher function:

Teacher/team member function:

- To lead the children/team members through an experience of carrying out the first steps of First Aid

Child/volunteer function:

- The child provides a human focus and a reminder of the stranded climber

#### **Step 4: Continuing the training session**

In this step you need to balance using on the children's prior knowledge with giving them information.

Because you are imagining a training session, there could be quite a lot of direct teaching. There is the opportunity to give the children access to information about First Aid that most if not all of them won't already know. So, you can start with quite a high authority stance (first aid trainer) but be careful, because the children don't want to feel talked down to. You can avoid this if you treat the session as an enquiry, that is you are working from people's prior knowledge and supporting them as they go along.

Get the children to show everyone what they know in practice rather than just telling you in the abstract. Some of the children may already have picked things up from watching television or going to hospital (particularly if they are older) but you can't count on it. However, whatever their age, from their personal experience all children do know – and can show everyone -- about how one person should take care of another by being gentle and careful etc.

To give them information as well as to record what they know (in what they say and do) you could add on to the list you began in Step 3 especially if you know First Aid procedures well. Alternatively, you could make a chart that looks like one that the mountain rescue team would have used in their First Aid training. You might adapt an actual one to simplify it and make it easily readable from a distance. You could also download from the website a chart that we've used with Junior children. In any event you can add notes to the chart to record what the children say and show each other.

A. Check for vital signs:

1. Breathing: listen + use stethoscope + check airways + use oxygen if necessary
2. Circulation: check pulse + use defibrillator if necessary

B. Check for possible injuries:

1. Look for physical signs of injury
2. Touch very carefully

- C. Move the patient
1. Roll on to stretcher
  2. Move as smoothly as possible
- For more information visit: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First\\_aid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_aid)

Within the time you have available you can work through some or all of the ABC of First Aid. If other children want to volunteer they can take over from the first child. Here is an example:

***Could we please have two volunteers to show us how to check the patient's pulse? Please note the different places. You can feel your own heart beating if you press here at your neck.***

***OK, now what can we do if the worst has happened and the heart has stopped? We could use the 'buzzer', right? We have one of those in the medi-kit. Can someone fetch it? Can you imagine that we've got one right here? Can anyone demonstrate how it is used? Let's just check with our volunteer. Do you know what happens to the person's body when they use the buzzer? Are you comfortable jolting like that?*** [Someone else can take his/her place if necessary]

***If you kneel here next to the patient you'll be in a good place. You will need to follow these instructions. First, say: 'charging' we will set the charge for you*** [Ask the children watching to turn the dial with you]. ***Second, shout – 'Stand clear' (otherwise people are in danger of being electrocuted). Third, shock the patient.*** [This is another example of when you could have a prepared chart for the children/team members to follow and read from]

***We'll listen for the noise of heart-beat, what would it sound like on the monitor? We might not hear it after the first charge, in fact the patient may need to be shocked two or three times...***

Irrespective of how much time you have available your aim in this Step is that the children know the ABC approach and will apply it in Phase 4. So, ask people to summarize what they've learned. They could do this verbally, later on, if you had time they could make their own illustrated First Aid note books & posters etc.

Purpose:

- To learn the ABC of First Aid

Teacher/team member function:

- To lead the children/team members through an experience of carrying out the ABC of First Aid and to balance telling the children information with using what they already know

Child(ren)/volunteer(s) function:

- The child(ren)/volunteer(s) provide(s) a human focus and a reminder of the stranded climber

### **Step 5: Practice the ABC of First Aid in small groups**

If you have time, ask the children to form groups of three or four to practice what they've learned. This step is additional preparation for Phase 4.

You can use similar approaches to those we suggest in Phase 2 Step 1.

Purpose:

- To apply what they've learned about First Aid

Teacher/team member function:

- To facilitate groups working together

## Phase 4: The Rescue

The rescue takes place in two different places: the helicopter on the mountain (where the climber is retrieved) and the medical room in the mountain rescue centre (where the climber is treated). The children will need to create both places at the same time. These could be formed quickly using a few chairs or tables or be more extensive creations.

Before you begin you need to do the following:

- You'll need to decide, depending on available time and resources, and the potential for curriculum exploration, how extensively you are prepared for the children to create these settings. In our experience, primary children of all ages relish the chance to use their rescue plans along with tables, chairs, boxes, and other supplies to transform the classroom into multileveled spaces where they will on their own happily play out multiple episodes of rescuing, and caring for, endangered climbers.
- Ask Mrs Green (A1) (or if necessary this could be another colleague or a pupil) to sit in the same spot as before with the drawing under her knee as if she is the climber up the mountain. Now she needs to slump over more to make the climber look as if she is unconscious.
- Identify an area in the room where the helicopter can be made. Use the same area for the medical centre that you used for the First Aid training
- Invite Mr Brown (A2) to join you again this time to take on the role of the equipment manager. He could hold a clipboard with a check-out form to be signed. Also identify a place where he can stand. If he is unavailable then either cut the equipment manager or you could consider taking on his role.
- Prepare a check-out form for Mr Brown and a Mission Report Form for the rescue team.

### Step 1: Refocusing on the climber

This step reconnects the children with the plight of the climber.

*1. Can you all come over here, please.* [Gather the class near the adult/climber who is slumped over as if unconscious]

*2. Before we go on I think we should look again at the climber* [indicate the other adult/climber]. *What do you notice has changed in her/him? And let me show you how large the pool of blood is now...* [You move to the paper with the blob to trace with your finger where a much larger pool of blood would be].

*Has anyone checked the weather recently. How bad is it out there?* [Children will likely volunteer information about wind speed, snow conditions, and visibility]

*How does all this new information affect our decision?* [Some children may suggest that the climber is already dead or that the weather is too bad to go. Just ask children what they think but don't have a discussion]

**3. I can't hide from you how dangerous this mission has become. We know how bad the weather is and there is a chance that some people on the rescue team may not come back. I don't want to say you have to go and we do need people to stay here to prepare the medical room ,the climber may need surgery. You'll have to make a choice now.**

**4.** [At this point the group are going to split into two. There are various ways of facilitating what happens next. For the medical team, if they haven't built the medical centre, then have available some more sugar paper and ask them to start getting ready for the climber, over in the corner.] **You're going to need to get the medical room ready. There is a good chance she's going to need an operation. We know her leg is bleeding badly and she may have other injuries we don't know about.** [The rescue team are going to need their equipment, see below.]

Purpose:

- To refocus on the climber
- To give children a choice over where in the story world they want to spend their time

Teacher/team member function:

- To facilitate the choice

## **Step 2: Collecting equipment by the rescue team and the medical team**

This step helps the children think through, with adult support, what they might need in terms of equipment to successfully rescue and then treat the climber

*Mr Brown(A2) is going to imagine that he's another person we need in our story -- the equipment manager. He's going to stand over here as if he is in front of his equipment supply store. **Our equipment manager can supply you anything that you need for the rescue team or for the medical team. He'll want to know what you need, why you need it, and he may ask you to sign out any equipment that is potentially dangerous.***

*[Mr Brown/equipment manager can talk with the children/team members about what they might need and suggest other supplies. He can also talk with them about why they might need supplies. In particular, they will have to say how they are going to use, any potentially dangerous supplies, justify their use, and sign them out. You can make a form for their signature on his clipboard. When they prepared their rescue plans the children will have thought through much of the equipment they will need. The First Aid training phase will also have suggested some new ideas to some children.]*

Now you/team member need to talk to each group.

**Rescue team: Get ready for the rescue, you will need to get your equipment from the equipment manager. I'll meet you on the helicopter.** [If this hasn't been built then it can be easily signed by using two chairs for the pilots.]

**Medical team:** [As this is going on you can check in on the medical team, to see if they need any help]. **I understand the weathers getting worse on the mountain. Not sure what kind of state she's going to be in when we get her down. I suppose we should prepare for the worst...**

Purpose:

- To think about the rescue in terms of equipment needed

Teacher/team member function:

- To facilitate

Teacher/equipment manager function:

- To assist the children to explain and justify their plans (not to evaluate or censor their ideas)

### Step 3: Rescuing the climber.

Everyone is now probably very excited. There maybe enormous energy in the room. It's likely to be noisy and this may feel very chaotic to you.

1. If you can step back and just watch you can assess if you need to interact.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- ◆ 'Is anyone not actively involved?' If not ask,
- ◆ 'Do any children need me to intervene?' If so ask,
- ◆ 'Should I take on higher or equal authority to best support those children?'

You can take on higher authority as the Rescue Commander if some children really need direction.

e.g. **If you're both co-pilots you just need to decide who has control when. Can you agree on that or do you need me to decide?**

Alternatively, as one of the team, you can take on equal authority to help children make some decisions

e.g. **Which area of the medical room do you want to work in? Is there anyone on the radio to talk to the people in the helicopter?**

2. Check that the children setting up the medical room are all engaged. They will need to be able to work without much input from you for about ten minutes. Ask yourself the same questions as listed under 1. We have always found that with only minimal initial intervention the children can run the medical room unassisted.

3. Co-ordinate the rescue. You will need to assist the children by joining the children/rescue team on the helicopter.

Try to assess in-the-moment by asking yourself the following questions:

- ◆ 'Can the children work on their own?' If not,
- ◆ 'How might my questions or comments help the children focus?' If so,
- ◆ 'Should I take on higher or equal authority to best support those children?'

a). Imagining the helicopter getting ready to leave

You can have a back-and-forth dialogue with the children/rescue team.

Here are a few possibilities for what you might say.

Teacher/team member standing with the helicopter crew, *Could anyone make a sound for us that would help us imagine the helicopter's motors starting up? Thank you. Is everyone on board in position ready to leave? Are you in radio connection with the rescue centre? Have you set the coordinates for where the climber is? How's the wind? Can you hold her steady?*

b). Flying to the site

Again, as much as possible let the children take the lead.

[Teacher/winch operator looking through binoculars] **Let us know when we're overhead. I can't see anything. Can anyone see her? How low can we get? Is the first team ready to go?**

c). Lowering the first team members to the injured climber

A very effective way to do this is for you to be the team member working the helicopter winch. This allows you control over the order and number of children who imagine that they are actually attempting the rescue and which children remain on the helicopter. As winch operator you don't have to control everything that's happening on the helicopter because children will be inventing their own parts of the narrative. It will work better if you stand on a bench or a stool (or anything that raises you above the ground as if flying in a helicopter), looking down (as if above the climber)

Teacher/winch operator shouting (as if above the wind) and turning your hand (as if operating a winch): **I can just about see her. First team get ready, I'm going to lower you down, one at a time.** [First rescuer descends] **How is she? Is she breathing? Do you need oxygen? Quick, someone grab the oxygen, I'll lower you down.**

d). Continuing to lower and raise team members

As the rescue gets under way in earnest what happens will develop in the moment. Though it may feel a bit chaotic, remember that the children's choices are limited by their plans, the First Aid training, and the direction you can give as the winch operator in dialogue with the rescuers.

**How's she doing?**  
**Can you hear her heart beat?**  
**Have you checked her pulse?**  
**Any broken bones?**  
**What more do you need?**  
**If you come up I can send the next person down.**

At any moment you can always change your position to take on more authority if necessary. For example, if the children are struggling with administering First Aid, you may need to jump down and work alongside them.



**Hold on. I'm coming down. I'll bring the de-fibrillator with me. Don't move her.**

4. Hoisting the patient and returning to the rescue centre

When the team agree that the patient is ready to be hoisted, ask everyone to get in position ready to lift

**Is anyone not ready for her to be hoisted? OK get in position.**

You don't actually lift Mrs Green but everyone can imagine this happening

**Now we're not actually going to lift her. Mrs Green will continue to lie there as we imagine the stretcher being lifted up. I'll narrate what happens. The rescue team had strapped her securely to the stretcher. As it was hoisted up, those on the ground saw it swing in the wind. Those in the helicopter saw it come closer as the pilots kept the aircraft steady in the gusting wind. They reached out to bring the stretcher safely into the helicopter. The last team members were hoisted up and off they flew back to the rescue centre where preparations had been made for any necessary emergency procedures.**

5. Finally, you negotiate a move in imagined space from the helicopter to the medical room

*OK. Let's all over move to the medical room now for the next part of our story. Just leave everything to do with the helicopter there and come over here. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs Green. Can someone help her up.*

Purpose:

- To enact the rescue
- To apply plans and knowledge

Teacher/team member function:

- To facilitate and mediate as necessary

Adult/climber function:

- To provide a focus

#### **Step 4: Medical treatment for the climber.**

In this step the responsibility for saving the climber's life now shifts to the medical team.

You can ask the medical team to get into position around or near the operating area. Ask Mrs Green to lie down in the area prepared by the children for a possible operation. She gets herself in position, flat on her back, as if she is the unconscious climber.

***Rescue team members, we need to stand back and give the medical team some room. Please make yourself comfortable, but make sure everyone can see. We're about to watch the medical team as they try to save the life of the climber...***

The children/medical team will apply everything they learned in the First Aid training but with more urgency because now it feels like an emergency. During the time when the recovery of the climber was going on the children are likely to have invented additional medical procedures, from their own prior knowledge, some of which is likely to be incorporated. The following imagined procedures are all possible:

- ABC First Aid procedures
- administering medicine
- setting up and connecting a drip
- cutting and sewing
- an emergency like the heart stops

In addition, there might be a time when something goes wrong e.g. the patient's heart needs restarting.

As with the rescue team, try to assess in-the-moment by asking yourself the following questions:

- ◆ 'Can the children work on their own?' If not,
- ◆ 'How might my questions or comments help the children focus?' If so,
- ◆ 'Should I take on higher or equal authority to best support those children?'

You can also re-focus through another drama convention: as the narrator of the unfolding story you can stop and/or move in time. You can also focus on what's going on internally.

***Let's pause there for a moment. Let's shift forward in time to a moment when, during the operation, things took a turn for the worse? Move your body to that moment now. And unpause.***

***Let's pause everything. Can we hear what the medical team are thinking about right now. Keep your eyes on the patient and when I stand beside you just tell us what's in your mind now. Start with 'I'm thinking about ...'***

Purpose:

- To enact the medical procedures
- To reflect on the meaning of the operation

Teacher/team member function:

- To facilitate and mediate as necessary

Adult/climber function:

- To provide a focus

## **Phase 5: Possible endings**

There are many ways of drawing the scenario to a close. Rather than having one ending, we prefer to have the opportunity for the children to create multiple possible endings and then reflect on those parallel endings to make meaning about the rescue events.

These are some possibilities:

- *Everyone look at the patient and in your mind decide how you want this to end. What are you thinking?*

*Can you get into groups of three or four people. Make sure that you're with people with whom you work well. Can you use your bodies to show us a photograph taken in exactly 5 years time.*

- *If the climber made a full recovery then show us what she's doing and who she's with.*
- *If she died then show us people who loved her and what they're doing as they remember her on the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the rescue.*
- *If she recovered but is debilitated, show us what she's doing and who she's with. You've got 3 minutes, OK?*

*Let's see the photographs one at a time. Does anyone want to go first? Last? We're not going to guess. Tell us who the people are in the photograph, where they are, and what they're doing. Then step into the photograph and hold it still. [The first group does this].*

*As we look at this photograph what might the people be thinking about the mountain rescue team? We'll speak their thoughts.*

*What are the rescue team members doing right now? If they could reply, what would they say? We'll speak their thoughts*

You can have a discussion as if you are the Mountain Rescue Team:

*So, when you think about everything that's happened, what do we know now about rescuing people that we didn't know before?*

*What did this rescue say about us, as rescuers? What do we do? What is it that we're about?  
What do we need to change or adapt?*

You can have a class discussion & reflection:

*Should people risk their own lives to rescue others? Why would they do that?  
How do you decide when to and when not to put your own life at risk to save another?  
Does a mountain rescue company ever not go on a rescue?  
Rescues of this kind are very expensive, how can we justify the expense? Perhaps the money would be better spent on other things? Can you justify funding every rescue attempt? What should we concentrate the money on?*

Purpose:

- To recognise that different endings are possible in people's life stories
- To reflect on the meaning of the events from multiple viewpoints

Teacher/team member function:

- To facilitate pupils' meaning making

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# MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM SCENARIO

PHASE 1	Introducing the problem	Notes	People & Resources
1	The Red Blob (5 mins)	- look at drawing - remind you of? - might be nothing - listen & accept	A prepared picture of red blob
2	The injured climber (5 mins)	- A1 Help us out - in a story - what do you notice? – use the blob	A1 Moves from seat & sits on floor clutching leg in pain
3	Narration (5 mins)	- I'm just going to draw – story of climber - building - helipad - satellite dish	Using a whiteboard draw picture of mountain – rescue centre - H
4	Stepping in (5 mins)	- Climber's options? - 999 - answer phone - hello, mountain rescue – pass phone round	A1 uses phone – answers Qs – I need help
<b>PHASE 2 Rescue Plans</b>			
1	Planning on paper (20 mins)	Level of authority: 1. Commander – <b>I'm going to need</b> - 2. One of the team – <b>We're to need</b> - 3. Helper – <b>What do you need?</b>	- large sheets (half A3 sugar paper) – felt tip pens
2	The reporter (10 mins)	- <b>I'm sorry to stop you – reporter – talk to you about plans – carry on working</b>	A2 with a note-pad – thank you, would you mind if I...
3	The report (5 mins)	- Can I stop you for a moment – overhear reporter – add anything might have missed?	A2 sits and types
<b>PHASE 3 First Aid Course</b>			
1	Shifting time (3 mins)	- Something we need to do – need first aid – imagine an earlier time	
2	A volunteer (3 mins)	Sit in a circle – someone pretend to be injured – lie down – we'll help by not giggling	
3	Beginning training (10 mins)	- <b>How should we start, she looks badly injured? – what's the first thing?</b>	Could use a large sheet of paper to record steps... 1,2,3,4,5
4	Continuing training (10 mins)	ABC – 1.airway, 2.breathing, 3.circulation. Then 4.bleeding & bones. 5.Moving...	
5	Possible extension	Practice in groups.	
<b>PHASE 4 The rescue</b>			
1	Back to the climber (2 mins)	- We need to look again... - let me show you... pool of blood – <b>can't hide dangers, not everyone has to come on rescue – split team</b>	A1 Comes back – now lying unconscious
2	Collecting equipment (5 mins)	- Equipment manager – <b>Please get whatever you need.</b>	A2 Hands out equipment
3	Rescuing the climber (10 mins) Medical team prepare (10 mins)	MT – prepare medical room for climber RT – start the helicopter – TIR winch operator – team lowered down – <b>How's she doing? – We'll send down...</b>	MT – large sheets of paper -draw RT - A1 – lying unconscious - team use first aid
4	Medical treatment (10 mins)	<b>We'll have to stand back &amp; let the medical team work...</b>	A1 lies in the medical centre as the team work
<b>PHASE 5 Possible endings</b>			
1	What happened?	<i>In your own mind how do you think things turn out for the climber?</i>	
2	Photograph extension	<i>In groups could you show us a photo taken in 5 yrs time – what would the rescue team say?</i>	
3	Discussion & reflection	<i>What do we know...? Say about us as MRT? What kind of people are we who...?</i>	<i>Should people risk their lives...? Ever not go? Money?</i>
		<i>Italics – teacher talking A1 Adult in role</i>	<b>Bold – teacher talking in role A2 Adult in role</b>

# The Mountain Rescue Team

