Why Do Creative Drama?
It is a useful tool to teach other things. It stimulates creativity and imagination. It provides an outlet for self-expression. The activities are esteem-building. Students, finding it both fun and natural, are successful. Children have the opportunity to try on different roles. There is a safe environment for expressing feelings, and at times working them through. Students can utilize the open-ended activities from whatever level of understanding they have achieved. It is community building.

Using Creative Drama.
Plan activities that are open-ended. Gently but firmly limit inappropriate behavior. For many activities there are no right or wrong answers. Never force a student to play. Do it for as short as 5 minutes. Be spontaneous or plan ahead. When necessary, demonstrate. Don’t use your time to guess answers. Create a positive atmosphere. Applause takes too much time and may not always be useful. Enjoy yourself!

Creative Movement/Warm ups

Suns and Raisins
Can be adapted to themes. “Everyone stretch your arms out wide like a giant sun and say ahhhh! Now scrunch up your face like a tiny raisin” Leader then continues I say sun…I say raisin. Add I say tree (arms straight up in the air) and I say grass (hands wave back and forth) The leader can ask each child to take one turn leading—they can choose one that everyone has done or make up a new one

Shake and Freeze
Leader – let's shake our hands “shake shake shake shake shake shake and freeze”, continue with different body parts, and then your whole body.

Sound and Movement Circle
Group stands in a circle. One person, begins by passing a sound and a movement to the person next to him, who then passes it on to the person next to him, and so on. The goal of this game is not to be creative, but to imitate exactly what is given to you. Always make eye contact as you receive and pass the sound and movement.

Bring Back My Bonnie
This game is done to the song “My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean”. The words:
My Bonnie lies over the ocean
My Bonnie lies over the sea
My Bonnie lies over the ocean
O bring back my Bonnie to me
Bring back
Bring back
O bring back my Bonnie to me, to me
Bring back
Bring back
O bring back my Bonnie to me.
The group sings the song. Whenever they sing a word beginning with the letter “B”, they must change their position. i.e. stand if they’re sitting, sit when they’re standing. The group decides ahead of time what the change will be.

An Egg
Players sit in a circle. They pat their hands on their thighs and then clap, then pat, then clap to a 1-2 beat. The leader, say Chance, starts by saying, “An egg, an egg, a hard boiled egg” to the beat. The group repeats the same phrase. The next person, say Judith, continues the chant substituting her own adjective to describe the egg. The group then repeats Judith’s phrase. This continues around the circle until everyone has gone. Other nouns can be substituted for “egg” as you see fit.

HEAD AND SHOULDERS BABY
All participants sing this song and do the moves as described.

Verse 1:
HEAD AND SHOULDERS BABY (clap hands) ONE, (clap) TWO (clap), THREE (clap)
(clap hands of participants on both sides as you count 1, 2, 3)
HEAD AND SHOULDERS BABY ONE, TWO, THREE
HEAD AND SHOULDERS
HEAD AND SHOULDERS
HEAD AND SHOULDERS BABY ONE, TWO THREE

Verses 2-7
KNEES AND ANKLES
PUSH THE BUTTON
TURN AROUND
MILK THE COW
KICK THE BUCK ET
TOUCH THE GROUND

To finish, the group says and does all the actions in order.

Yes let’s
The group stands in a circle. The leader calls out an activity by saying, “Let’s pick apples!” for example. The group answers, “Yes, let’s!” and they all pretend to pick apples. Then another person in the group thinks of an activity and calls it out—“Let’s brush our teeth!” The group answers “Yes, let’s!” and stops picking apples and pretends to brush their teeth. The game continues with different people calling out activities and everyone saying, “Yes let’s!” The leader ends it by saying, “Let’s stop!” and everyone answers “Yes, let’s!”

Games that Can Be easily adapted to themes or stories

Front to Front to Front
Players stand in a circle. One enters the center, say Larry. Everyone sings:
“Here comes Larry on a ... (Larry fills in the thing, say a ‘broomstick’ and then proceeds to mime the action, moving around the circle.)
Here comes Larry on a broomstick.
Here comes Larry on a broomstick, and this is what he told me...
(Larry stops to face one person in the circle and dances with him, in this case, Keith, while all continue to sing.)
Front to front to front, My baby (Larry and Keith dance facing each other)
Back to back to back, My baby (L and K dance with butts facing each other)
Side to side to side, My baby (L and K dance side to side)
And this is what he told me. (L takes K’s place and K enters the center. Song continues.)
Here comes Keith on a ...
Continue until all have been in the center. End with whole group dancing front, back, and side to side.
Walking On the Sidewalk
Start in a circle-walking. Everyone chants “we’re Walking, We’re Walking. We’re Walking on the sidewalk.” Ask children where are we going? Once you have an answer, ask them how do we get ready to go there and act it out. Then walk in a circle again, and chant we’re Walking, We’re Walking. We’re Walking on the sidewalk.” Continue to ask open ended questions that can be acted out (look there’s something shiny on the sidewalk-what is it? Let’s pick it up! Look up-what do you see in the sky? I hear a loud noise! What is it?) always go back to the chant. Once you have arrived, act out what you do there, and then try to reverse the order you did everything in until you are back home!

Curl up and Be
Ask the children to curl up on the floor and be as small as they can. Lead them through the stages of a seed growing-first ask them to imagine what their seed will grow into. Tell them they are tiny seeds underneath the earth. Tap their backs as you water them, rub their backs for the sun shining. Lead them through their seeds popping out of the soil, a tiny stem starts to grow and grow, branches and leaves start to grow. A mild breeze blows. The sun shines–feel the warmth on your face. But then it gets colder-the wind blows harder. The sun goes away. The stems shiver in the cold. Their leaves fall off one by one. The stems start to whither, curling back down towards the ground until it curls back underneath the soil to wait until spring. Ask the children to sit up in a circle and share what their seed became. You can vary this exercise in many ways: kittens waking up from a nap, drinking milk, playing with yarn, etc. Or people waking up in the morning-go through (or ask children for suggestions) what you do when you wake up-yawn, stretch, brush teeth, put on clothes, eat, etc. A chick coming out of its egg, a tadpole turning into a frog. The variations are endless.

This is What I Can Do
This can be done sitting in a circle with each child taking a turn to lead OR the leader can be in the middle of the circle (depends on size of the group). Chose a child to go first, ask them to do a movement that we can all repeat-the rest of the group will follow along while everyone sings:
THIS IS WHAT I CAN DO
EVERYBODY DO IT TOO
THIS IS WHAT I CAN DO
NOW I PASS IT ON TO YOU (either the child who is leading or the teacher chooses the next leader)
This activity can be done with a theme–ask children to think of an animal, a way to travel, activity you do when you get up in the morning, etc.

Voting With Your Feet
“Director” demonstrates the different areas of the stage (SR, SL, US, DS, C) Group begins standing center. Leader calls out, “Everyone wearing the color blue, move upstage”. Continue the game calling out different areas of the stage and different criteria for kids to move. Eventually, try more complex combinations like downstage right, etc. For younger children simply create distant areas (near the window, on the rug, against the wall etc).

FRUIT BOWL
Players sit in a circle in chairs; one person is in the middle. Everyone gets a fruit name: apple, banana, or pear. The caller names one fruit, those people need to cross the circle and find another chair. The caller does the same. Whoever is left standing is the next caller. The caller can also say “Fruit Bowl.” Then everyone must get up, cross the circle and find a new chair.
Magic Floor
Ask the students to move around the space and then practice freezing a few times. Then the 
leader will say when I count to 3 I am going to turn the magic floor into....(sticky bubble gum, 
mud, a jungle, jello, etc). after several rounds you can ask the students to turn the magic floor 
into something.

Magic box
Pass around an imaginary box, each player takes a turn taking something out and using it in a 
familiar way. The rest of the group must guess what the object is by the actions of the player. 
Then, the player puts the object back into the box, and passes it to the next player. For young 
players, pick a theme, like something to wear, eat, etc. ask for an idea, and the whole group 
takes the item out together and uses it.

Mirror
Have the students face you and say now you are all looking into a mirror. 
The leader must move VERY slowly. Everyone will follow as if they are the mirror. Encourage them to 
mirror not only body movement but also facial expression. You can then ask for someone else to be the 
leader. Once played a few times you can do this in pairs (tap the leader on the shoulder, switch later) or im 
4s (everyone gets a number-when you call their number they are the leader in their group)

Machines
1. Start with one student making a noise and a simple repeatable gesture. 
2. When the student has a rhythm and another student has an idea for a movement which 
connects to the first gesture that student joins the first student by making a new noise and 
movement which connects to the original gesture. 
3. Each student joins in with a new noise and gesture and connects to the others in some way 
until all students are involved in creating the machine. 
The leader can then slow down or speed up the machine. 
VARIATION: Decide on a type of machine and then have everyone create it together- everyone 
starts at the same time.

Rainstorm
The goal is to create the sound of a rainstorm using only our bodies. This requires no speaking 
2. Ask everyone to sit with you in a circle on the floor. 
3. You will begin an activity, then the person to your right will join in, then the person to his/her 
right will join in, etc. until it creates a wave all around the circle. Once it reaches back to you (the 
leader) you begin a different activity, and this creates a second wave. 
4. Tell the students that they are to carefully copy the movements of the person to their left, and 
not switch activities until that person switches. Try to encourage them to not focus on “the 
leader”, but instead on the person to their left. For younger students have everyone start at the 
same time-without asking them to copy the person next to them. You will lead each movement, 
and they will follow.
5. Activity 1: Rub your hands together. (This is the wind) 
6. Activity 2: Tap one finger on the palm of your hand. (These are the first raindrops.) 
7. Activity 3: Tap all 4 fingers. (Many more rain drops.) 
8. Activity 4: Full out clapping. (It’s getting more intense!) 
9. Activity 5: Slap on the floor, or your thighs. (Thunder enters!) 
10. After a big crescendo, repeat all the activities in reverse order as the storm dies down, until 
you’re rubbing hands together.
11. Then quietly stop, and there should be absolutely silence.

Tableaux Titles
The group is divided into two teams that line up and face each other. One team calls out a never before heard title such as “The angry cheese”; they then close their eyes and count out loud to ten. During this count of ten, the other team must make tableaux or “frozen picture” that brings the title to life. On the count of ten, they freeze. The other team opens their eyes, sees the tableau and applauds. The other team then calls out a title etc. The important thing is to move as quickly as possible after the title is called. The longer you stand and thin, the harder it is to find your place in the picture.

Who started the motion?
- ask someone to leave the room while the others sit in circle and choose a secret leader.
- The leader will start with a repetitive motion that the others follow and the leader will slowly change the motion while the others follow without missing a beat.
- The student from outside will come back in and try to figure out who the leader is.
- He/she will only get two or three guesses.

The Story of Putting Our Feet to Sleep

This is the story of putting our… feet! To sleep!
Yawn and stretch
It was very late. It was time to put our feet to sleep. So we walked up the stairs. We opened the door. We turned on the light. We put one foot in the bed. We put the other foot in the bed. We fluffed the pillows. We pulled up the covers. We poured a glass of water. We gave one foot a drink. We gave the other foot a drink. We gave ourselves a drink. We gave one foot a kiss. We gave the other foot a kiss.

And we said Feet! It’s time to go to sleep!

O we turned off the light. We shut the door. And we wiggled back down the stairs. We sat in our comfy chair. Picked up our favorite book. Gave a nice big sigh. When suddenly—shut— from upstairs we heard such noise!

Those feet weren’t sleeping; they were jumping up and down on the bed. They were jogging on the bed. Sliding back and forth on the bed. Tapping toes, taping heels, Jumping up and down as fast as they could on the bed.

So we said Ugh, all together UGH
So we wiggled back up the stairs, we listened at the door. But those feet weren’t sleeping, they were still jumping up and down on the bed. They were jogging on the bed. Sliding back and forth on the bed. Tapping toes, taping heels, Jumping up and down as fast as they could on the bed.

So we said UGH, all together UGH
And we said Feet! It’s time to go to sleep.
So we opened the door, turned on the light, looked in the bed—but there no feet! (put feet behind you)

We looked under the pillows—but there were no feet
Covers, ceiling, out the window, in the closet, through the clothes, in the shoes, in the trash P-U, and then we look under the bed!
Do you know what we found?? Our feet! So we said feet! It’s time to go to sleep!
We put one foot in the bed. We put the other foot in the bed. We fluffed the pillows. We pulled up the covers. We poured a glass of water. We gave one foot a drink. We gave the other foot a drink. We gave ourselves a drink. We gave one foot a kiss. We gave the other foot a kiss.

And we said Feet! It’s time to go to sleep!
So we turned off the light. We shut the door. We listened at the door. And do know what those feet were so tired from jumping up and down on the bed that they were fast asleep and they were SNORING!
The end of our story, putting our feet to sleep
Feet clap, hand clap.

ONCE UPON A TIME-3 Bears

The leader says a line and does a movement, then the children repeat it…

Once Upon a Time In a Nursery Rhyme
There were 3 bears-cha-cha –cha
One day they were walking
In the woods they were talking
When along came a little girl
With long golden curly hair
Her name was Goldilocks
And up upon the door she knocked
She didn’t care if no one was there
She walked right in, chicka-boom, chicka-boom
Home came those 3 bears
Someone’s been eating my porridge, said the Papa Bear,
Said the Papa Bear
Someone’s been earing my porridge, said the mama Bear
Said the Mama Bear
Hey little wee bear, said the little wee bear
Someone has broken my chair HUH!
Goldilocks she woke up and broke up the party
And she beat it out of there
YES she beat it out of there
Bye, bye bye bye said the Papa Bear
Said the Papa Bear
Bye, bye bye bye said the Mama Bear
Said the Mama Bear
Hey Little wee bear said the little wee bear
Bye bye bye bye bye bye-HUH!

READING AND ACTING OUT STORIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

-READ THE STORY TO YOURSELF FIRST
- Read the story with the children
  - Be expressive
  - Use different voices if you wish
  - Ask if the children know “big words”, help define

- Act out the story as a group
  - Act out the actions
  - Find repetition and cue everyone
  - Find phrases to say all together

- Ask open ended questions and act out the answers
  - Fill in the blanks about things not answered in the story—make a list (ie. where did the monkeys wake up this morning, what did the peddler dream about, where are the people in the village?)
  - Take an illustrated page without reading the words, and ask, “what is happening in this picture?”—give children time to build…phrasing the question this way will encourage children to storytell

- Narrate the story (you can edit your narration to fit this activity), and have the children take parts/roles to act out with movement and simple lines to say

- Make props/sets/costumes as an art activity—these could be used to help act out the story, or simply be an extension of the story

- Adapt the theater games and play them with the children—these can be done before, during or after you have read/acted out the story