

Duffel Bag and Carpet

Interactive Drama Story about Finding a Job in Finland
(short version)

Screenplay: Jouni Piekkari

Background: This instructional story about immigrants' job search was developed in the KAMU project (coordinated by Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, see kamu.metropolia.fi/en/). Made in cooperation with the Finnish Refugee Council's Kurvi project whose aim was to reach young immigrants in challenging life situations, this imaginary and interactive story is based on several real life portraits.

Target group: immigrants (possibly participating in labour market training programmes) and people working with them.

Objectives:

This drama story can be used for different purposes:

- a. to empathize with the situation of disadvantaged immigrant youth;
- b. to create interactive workshops and brainstorming sessions for e.g. young immigrants, people working with them and decision-makers
- c. to enhance job-search skills and related language learning during e.g. preparatory education for immigrants

Alternative version for learning the Finnish language and to be used in immigrant training:

- The story and tasks are shown in simple language
- As an aid, e.g. drawing and writing can be used (see e.g. bag contents below)
- The director should use a lot of gestures and mimic in his/her narration
- Classmates can help out with translations. In addition, participants can use translation aids such as software and dictionaries.
- It is possible to divide the story into a number of different lessons and use more time for an individual task.
- Home assignments may be required (e.g. a letter to relatives)
- The job application form can be used as a support when applying for a job (i.e. in a real life situation)
- The different parts of the story may also be given to participants in written form (applies for people with reading and writing skills)
- Spoken sections can also be acted as role play
- People who have just applied for a job can discuss the topic using corresponding vocabulary, and the instructor can inform them about the target country's labour legislation
- Women and men can be divided into different groups

Required material: sticky notes and pens, a "doorbell", chairs, job announcement (see attachment), paper.

The narrative parts are shown in *italics*.

Way of Working	Drama Contents/Tasks
Drama Agreement	<p>The instructors teach the participants how a drama story works, i.e. how everyone gets to empathize to a story based on real life. Everybody's input is needed to make the drama work successfully, but the participation in different stages of the drama is voluntary. If wishing to do so, a participant can also stand by and observe an individual assignment being completed. Participation does not require special acting skills – only the willingness to work together.</p>
Narrative + music	<p><i>The story's protagonist, "Rofa", comes from an imaginary country called ____ (come up with a name for this country!). He is a 20-year-old young man with a cheerful attitude even though life not always has treated him well. Nobody knows much about his life before Finland and has to ask him about it in order to find out more.</i></p> <p><i>After a multiphase journey through his war-torn homeland, Rofa arrives in Finland all by himself without any friends or family. Not speaking a single word of the local language, he finally ends up in the city of Rovaniemi, northern Finland, with nothing but a single duffel bag with him.</i></p>
Pair discussion	<p>Imagine arriving in Rovaniemi, Finland, as a young man of 22 years and a complete newcomer. After waking up at the train station on a cold winter morning, what would you plan doing first? Discuss with your partner.</p>
Imagining the contents of the duffel bag	<p><i>All of Rofa's belongings could fit into a single duffel bag (group members partner up). Discuss with your partner about the items this bag could contain. Remember that Rofa has only taken his most important items with him. What does he have left from his home country? What has he collected along the way during his trip to Finland? What is the most important item in his everyday life? Each partner chooses one item and places it into the bag (imaginarily or by writing it on a sticky note).</i></p>
Narrative + mime	<p><i>The bag contained Rofa's most expensive possession: his first self-knit carpet. When Rofa was only five years old, his grandfather started teaching him the challenging skill of carpet weaving. After all, Grandfather was known as the master of this work in their former home region. Wherever Rofa went, he always carried this carpet with him. What things did Rofa use his carpet for?</i></p> <p>Participants gather in a circle, and in turn each participant suggests a purpose for which Rofa could have used the carpet. This can either work as a guessing game or by stating the answer explicitly.</p>

Narrative	<p><i>Being a young man with a positive attitude, Rofa quickly learned to manage in Finland. He learned spoken Finnish pretty well, which helped him to get through most everyday situations. In fact, had it not been for the weekly Skype conversations with his uncle, he would almost have forgotten his native language. However, after some time he started to get bored of the dull living patterns of Rovaniemi. The city felt too small for him and there were not many of his fellow countrymen around either. After all, he was a young man from a big city, even if he had been living in simple conditions. Then Rofa got to know some people from the capital, Helsinki. These two guys were living together in a small one-room apartment in the lively Kallio district and suggested Rofa to move in with them. One of them, Lexa (who had received his nickname from his Finnish schoolmates) studied at a vocational school to be a car mechanic. The other, Gebe, was working long hours in a pizza restaurant owned by his fellow countrymen.</i></p>
Still images	<p><i>What was it like for these three friends to live in a small 18-square-meter studio flat in Kallio (or any other local suburban / residential area)?</i></p> <p>The participants divide into groups of three and get to see a small (approx. 1,5x 1,5 metres) space on the floor marked off with e.g. masking tape. Each group plans a situation out of an ordinary day in this 'studio flat' (the marked space on the floor) and acts it out as a still image where participants play different roles. The whole group will look through all images one at a time. Additionally, each image comes into life for a short moment (approximately 30 seconds) from a snap of fingers.</p>
Job application / Director in the role	<p><i>One day, Rofa's room mate Lexa, already quite fluent in Finnish, comes home with a note in his hand and bursts out in excitement: "Look what I found in a shop window, Rofa! A job made for you." (job announcement [see attachment] is read aloud)</i></p> <p><i>So, Rofa decides to call the number on the announcement and gets invited to a job interview.</i></p>
Shared roles	<p>A division into two groups follows. Group number one settles to one side of the circle; number two on the other side. Participants in group one play the role of Mr. or Mrs. Mättö; group number two acts as Rofa. From the point of view of their role, each team thinks about how to prepare for a job interview. What should a person consider when conducting it? At the end, teams switch places and look at the issue from the opposite role (questions, strengths, good and bad responses, what strategy to use). Finally, everybody returns to their original role.</p>
Simulation and switching roles	<p>Participants put their chairs in two rows facing each other. These constitute the interviewing couple and the person being interviewed, i.e. Rofa on one side, Eino or Iris Mättö on the other (each participant gets to choose whether they want to act in the role of a man or</p>

	<p>a woman). Group members will leave to ‘the shop's back room’ (Mättö), or ‘the street’ (Rofa) to prepare for an interview. Then the director rings the ‘doorbell’, after which people start arriving for the job interview. The interview starts with greetings and the participants sitting down.</p> <p>From a sign (ring of a bell), chairs and roles are switched. The interview continues from where it left off, but with each participant in a new role. This is repeated a few times, at intervals of approximately half a minute. Finally, the director ends the interview by ringing the bell.</p> <p>Analysis and discussion: participants analyze their experiences in pairs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the interview make them feel? • What was easy and what was difficult? • Would Rofa have received the job?
Analysis and discussion in a large group	The whole group continues discussing the previous question
Still images	<p>Prospects for the future:</p> <p>Divide the participants into small groups of 3 to 4 people. Their task is to produce two still images Rofa’s possible future: a) All ends well with Rofa, b) Things do not end up well for Rofa. The images are viewed one at a time: ‘What can you see?’ ‘What is going to happen?’ From a snap of fingers, every image will come to life for a short instant.</p>
Pairwise listing of questions	<p>Participants are divided into pairs. Together with their partner, each participant has to make a list of the questions raised by the issue of young immigrants and job seeking. The questions are listed on large flap boards.</p> <p>Some of the questions will then be selected for further reflection, and the group will think about possible answers to them. These can, for example, be written as essays or raised as discussion topics and collaborative research subjects.</p> <p>Alternative: What if the main character would have been a woman? How would the story have looked in that case?</p>
Follow-up	Participants consider ideas for follow-up actions (i.e. job search courses, networking, visits, friend activities). At the end, the group will implement these.

Attachment

(Job Announcement)

WE ARE HIRING!

Carpet Business Eino and Iris Mättö Ltd.

is looking for a skilled assistant in the Kallio area.

We sell, and wash carpets and also do repairs and installation.

We expect:

- experience in the carpet industry
- experience in sales work
- positive attitude

We are looking for a brisk young person to work at our shop. We offer training alongside work including career advancement opportunities since we are both about to retire soon.

Contact: 048 77444821