



Fourth grader Kim Eaton was a bit embarrassed to stand so close to fifth grader Matt Firlik during the rehearsal of a mime scene.

Kids showcase talents in mime performance

By Casey Hans
staff writer

IN AN UNUSUAL dramatic production and learning experience, a group of students at Eagle Elementary have produced and

performed an original mime drama. Thanks to a grant from the school's PTA, 14 fourth and fifth graders were selected to study with mime Michael Lee of Ann Arbor, who took students through four days of two-hour workshops

culminating in a performance on Friday.

Lee has studied with the world renowned mime Marcel Marceau and has shared his mime experiences with students throughout the Midwest for six years.

"It's really a different form of communication," said principal Sue Johnson. "We've never had this before. I think it has real potential."

Mime is considered the art of body language. It allows the children to express joy, sorrow, anger and fear as they relate to their school and the world around them.

LEE FIRST visited the school to put on all-school mime assemblies, then interviewed students who were interested in the workshop.

Students get to design their themes, work on the production and fine-tune it before presenting their drama to others in the school.

Several students likened one segment of their production to the conflict in the Middle East.

The students worked in a circle around classmate Amy Goo who was in the center.

"When we jerked up, we saw the enemy and laid back down because we didn't want to get hurt," said Nicolina Traverso, speaking about the group's choreography of up-and-down movement.

"I just thought that maybe Amy was hope," added Lisa Neeley, referring to her classmate, whose mime role was sitting quietly in the center of a circle of students, then standing and moving about among the others.

"She rose back up, and there was more hope."



Fourth grader Lisa Neeley falls to the floor with others in the Eagle mime troupe.



Nicolina Traverso, an Eagle fifth grader, wants to be part of the group but is rejected during a rehearsal of the mime routine.



Learning the art of mime, students from Eagle step lightly around a circle. This was one of several two-hour mime workshops for students before their school assembly.



Mime instructor Michael Lee of Ann Arbor tells his Eagle Elementary troupe to "step low" and "move slowly."

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