

## — Creating a Tableau —

A tableau (full name: tableau vivant) is a living picture. A group of students can arrange themselves in a silent and motionless scene to represent a moment in a Dear Canada diary. Tableaux help develop understanding and response to literature, and require good group or collaborative skills.

### Preparation

- How do we express our feelings or attitudes through our bodies? Try modelling what a sad person looks like, as well as a happy person, an angry person and a frightened person.
- Practise tableaux in pairs. Create some situations or scenarios. (Some examples might be a father and son playing catch, a mother feeding her child, two children arguing over a toy.) Pose in one of the scenes you have invented. Remember that you cannot speak or move! Present your tableau to the class. Have the other students in the class guess the scene you are posing.
- After sharing several scenes, consider which tableaux were most effective. How did the students convey emotion through their bodies and expressions?

### Procedure

- In a group of two to five, create a tableau for a critical moment in the diary. In addition to conveying the emotion of the moment, it is important to create a visually interesting scene. For example, you could set yourselves up to create different levels in height and an interesting placement on the floor. You may even use props if you wish.
- Prior to presenting your tableau to the class, write a paragraph together identifying the scene you are presenting and the characters involved, and explaining why your group felt this was a critical moment in the diary.
- Present your tableau. Once you are frozen in your scenes, your teacher will tap each of you on the shoulder one at a time. This tap is your signal to break your silence and recite a short monologue describing your character's situation and feelings.