



~ IMPROV THEATER ~



Theater Games to help quickly create interesting characters, dialogue and story with whatever items you have available

Fun for the whole family, all ages!

WEEK 2

Reference: On Stage, Theater Games and Activities for Kids, by. Lisa Bany-Winters



The Dubbing Game

Purpose: This game lets kids be the actors and the dubbed voices.

Procedure:

1. Choose two people to be the actors and two to be their voices.
2. The players begin by agreeing on a “who,” “what,” and “where.”
3. Each voice player stands near their actor player.
4. The actors begin improvising the scene – they don’t talk, but they move their lips as if they are talking.
5. When the scene begins, the voice players begin speaking for the actors.
6. Play this game at least twice so each player can be an actor and a voice.

Note:

- In this game, both the actors and the voices have power. The actors have the power of movement. The voices have the power of speech. You can make a successful improv scene when you work together.

Vocabulary:

Dubbing – When films are “dubbed,” the original sound is removed so the new sound can be added. In order to understand what the actors are saying in foreign films, for example, sometimes their voices are dubbed over so it sounds like they are speaking English.



Gibberish

Purpose: How to understand each other by the way we say things – the “emphasis” that we place on each word – rather than the actual words we say.

Procedure:

1. Each player should choose a partner and agree on a “who,” “what,” and “where”.
2. Your scene should involve teaching others how to do or make something.
3. Give the title of your scene before you perform it. It should be in the form “how to...”; for example, “how to bake cookies.”
4. Decide who will speak gibberish and who will “interpret,” or restate what the other is saying in English. Do not plan anything else in advance.
5. Begin your scene with the person speaking gibberish explaining how to bake cookies, pausing every couple of sentences so the interpreter can restate what’s being said in English.
6. Continue the scene until you have finished explaining how to bake cookies.

Suggestions for How-to Scenes:

- ❖ How to tie your shoe
- ❖ How to swim
- ❖ How to ride a bicycle
- ❖ How to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich
- ❖ How to change a light bulb
- ❖ How to change a tire
- ❖ How to fix a broken doll

Vocabulary:

Gibberish – “Talking gibberish” means mumbling or creating your own language, with sounds and words that you make up.



Keyword

Purpose: Helps to keep kids on their feet.

Procedure:

1. In a group, choose a “who,” “what,” and “where.”
2. Each player in the group chooses a word – such as “snake,” “bus,” or “together” – that is related to the “who,” “what,” and “where” chosen.
3. Begin improvising your scene.
4. Whenever your word is said, leave the scene and then when it is said again, re-enter the scene. You must exit and enter in character
5. . Be sure to make up a good reason to exit or enter each time your word is said.
6. Continue with the game until your scene comes to an end.

Note:

- You can have a lot of fun sending your scene partners in and out by working their words into the scene, but don't forget, they can do the same to you.



Here's an example of how this game might work:

Elena's word is "snake," Juan's word is "bus," and Carlos' word is "together." Their "who," "what," and "where" is three friends making cookies in a kitchen.

Elena: "I can't wait to eat all of the cookies we're baking."

Juan: "Me too, and I'm so glad we could all get together for once."

Carlos: "Oh, no, we're out of sugar. I'll go borrow some from next door."

Carlos exits because the word "together" was said.

Juan: "Let's cut the cookies into shapes."

Elena: "Great idea. I'll make mine shaped like a bus."

Juan: "I'd better go see what's taking our friend so long with the sugar."

Juan exits because "bus" was said.

Elena (calling offstage): "Hurry up, you guys! I thought we were baking together!"

Carlos reenters because "together" was said.

Carlos: "Well, they didn't have any sugar, but they showed me their cool new pet snake."

Elena: "Look at the time. I've got to go catch my bus. See you later."

Elena exits because "snake" was said. Jake reenters because "bus" was said.

Juan: "No sugar. Oh, well, so much for making cookies. I guess we'll try again tomorrow."

The scene ends.

Vocabulary:

Character - a person in a play

Offstage - not on the stage and so not visible to the audience



Name Yes

Purpose: This is a great name-learning game.

Procedure:

1. Players stand in a circle.
2. Player 1 starts by pointing to Player 2 and saying their name.
3. Player 2 says "yes".
4. Player 1 can then leave their spot in the circle and start walking towards Player 2's spot.
5. Before they get there, Player 2 needs to point to Player 3 and say their name. Player 2 can't move out of the way for Player 1 to have their space until Player 3 says "yes."
6. Player 3 says "yes," and Player 2 begins walking toward Player 3's place in the circle. Player 3 then must say someone else's name to get another space before Player 2 gets there, and so on.
7. After a while, the game should flow smoothly so that players are walking into spaces as other players are leaving them.



Best Field Trip Ever!

Purpose: To see the difference between accepting your partners improvisation prompt, verses rejecting it.

Procedure:

1. Each player should sit with a partner and begin planning the best field trip ever. But every sentence you say must start with either “No” or “Yes, but.” For example, Player 1 must say, “Let’s go to Hawaii,” and Player 2 responds with, “No, it’s too expensive,” or “Yes, but not during the summer.”
2. Continue the conversation for about three minutes, remembering to start every sentence with “No” or “Yes, but.”
3. Then share with the group what plans you made. Chances are you didn’t even reach a decision on where to go, much less plan the best field trip ever.
4. Now start the conversation over again, but this time every sentence must start with, “Yes, and.” You’re not allowed to say “no” or “but.” Plan the best field trip ever with your partner, and start each sentence with, “Yes, and.” Notice how much further you get in your planning and how much more positive and fun the field trip is.
5. Share the field trip you created with the group.



“Yes And” Monster

Purpose: To practice saying yes to whatever improvisation prompt your partner gives you.

Procedure:

1. Players sit in a circle and imagine that there is a monster in the middle of the circle.
2. One player starts by making a statement about the monster, such as, “That monster has bright green fur.”
3. The player to their left says, “Yes.” Then they repeat the previous statement and adds “and”: “That monster has bright green fur, and.”
4. They then add another statement about the monster, such as, “She’s wearing a frilly pink dress.”
5. The next player says, “Yes,” repeats the previous statement, says “and,” and adds another fact about the monster.
6. Make sure you always say, “Yes, and.” “No” and “but” are not allowed in this game.
7. Continue the game until everyone has had a chance to add at least one piece of information about the monster.
8. Then talk about what an amazing monster you all created together.

Other “Yes And” Things You Can Create Together:

- ❖ An alien
- ❖ A sandwich
- ❖ Soup
- ❖ A dollhouse
- ❖ A swamp
- ❖ An ant colony



Better Letters

Purpose: This game helps fast talkers learn how to slow down.

Procedure:

1. Two players choose a “who” and “where” (or take suggestions from other players).
2. They are then told that, in their scene, they must replace every S with a T.
3. They improvise their scene, but as they talk, every word that has an S in it, is said with a T instead.

Here’s an example of how to play:

Leticia and Elizabeth have chosen to play a doctor and a patient in the doctor’s office.

Elizabeth: “What teems to be the problem?”

Leticia: “Well, Doctor, I’m tick.”

Elizabeth: “Doet your tomach hurt?”

Leticia: “Yet. And to does my note.”

Elizabeth: “Your note? What happened to your note?”

Leticia: “I trained it.”

Vocabulary:

To play – to act out



Countdown

Purpose: To remember the order of scenes so you can revisit them in backwards order.

Procedure:

1. Player 1 starts a scene alone doing something that someone could do alone, such as playing hopscotch.
2. After a few moments, Player 2 enters and starts a completely different scene, such as working at an ice cream parlor.
3. The two continue that scene for a bit until Player 3 enters and starts a brand-new scene. They might say, "Welcome to your first day of yoga."
4. Players 1 and 2 act out the yoga class for a few moments until Player 4 enters and starts a brand new four-person scene, perhaps in preschool.
5. They all play the preschool scene until Player 5 enters and starts something new altogether, such as a baseball game.
6. After a few moments of playing baseball, Player 5 makes up an excuse in character and leaves the scene.
7. The other four players immediately go back to the fourth scene, the preschool.
8. Then Player 4 makes an exit from that scene, and the three immediately return to the yoga class.
9. In a few moments, Player 3 exits that scene, and the two remaining players return to the ice cream parlor.
10. Then Player 2 exits the scene, leaving Player 1 alone playing hopscotch.

Vocabulary:

Character - a person in a play



Old Job, New Job

Purpose: This game explores the craziness that would ensue if someone suddenly decides to change jobs.

Procedure:

1. Choose one or two players to be the customers...or victims. It depends on the situation, whether you want the first one or the second one. For example, the dentists only need one patient, but the waiters could use two customers.
2. Then choose two others to play the workers. Tell them what their old job was and what their new job is.
3. Have them improvise a scene exploring all the ways that could get crazy.

Examples:

- ❖ Old job: firefighters; new job: dentists. The dentists may try to examine the patient's mouth with a hose.
- ❖ Old job: dog trainers; new job: waiters. The waiters may give the customers treats for good behavior.
- ❖ Old job: carpenters; new job: hairstylists. The hairstylists may try to cut hair with a saw.

Vocabulary:

To play – to act out



Five-Sided Dice

Purpose: To practice communicating through gibberish.

Procedure:

1. Send one player out of the room. They will be the guesser.
2. Five other players line up in front of “the audience.”
3. Player 1 steps forward and is given a suggestion for a famous person, living or dead, to portray.
4. Player 2 then joins Player 1.
5. The two of them get a suggestion for a famous pair or duo.
6. Player 3 joins them, and the three of them are given a suggestion of a very famous movie.
7. Player 4 joins the other three, and they get a suggestion for a famous landmark or tourist attraction.
8. Player 5 joins the group and is given a suggestion for a historical event.
9. The guesser enters the room and begins improvising a scene.
10. They speak only in gibberish with Player 1, who is acting like the suggested celebrity.
11. Then play a scene together for a few moments while the guesser is trying to figure out who the celebrity is.
12. Then Player 2 enters, and Players 1 and 2 become the famous pair.
13. The guesser continues in a gibberish scene with them as they try to figure out who they are.
14. After a few moments of that scene, Player 3 enters, and the three players begin acting out the famous movie – in gibberish, of course.
15. The guesser plays along with the scene while trying to figure out the movie.
16. Then Player 4 enters, and the four players become or act out the tourist attraction along with the guesser.
17. And finally, Player 5 enters, and the five actors act out the historical event.
18. Someone calls out, “Scene,” and the guesser tells the audience who or what they thought each scene was about.



Note:

- It's OK to guess wrong in this game. In fact, it adds to the humor of the scene.

Vocabulary:

Audience – people watching the scene

Gibberish – “Talking gibberish” means mumbling or creating your own language, with sounds and words that you make up.



Clue

Purpose: This gibberish game is based on the boardgame Clue and becomes a mad mystery.

Procedure:

1. Send Players 1 and 2 out of the room.
2. With Player 3, decide on an occupation or a celebrity (the “who”), an object that was used as a weapon (the “what”), and a location or room (the “where”). Player 1 reenters and begins acting out a gibberish scene with Player 3 in which Player 3 is pretending to be the celebrity.
3. The scene continues long enough for Player 1 to get a good idea of who the celebrity might be.
4. Then Player 3 begins demonstrating their surroundings and showing what kind of room he is in.
5. They continue to talk with Player 1 in gibberish until they think Player 1 may know the room.
6. Then they pretend to pick up the suggested object. They use it and talk in gibberish to communicate what the object is.
7. When Player 1 thinks they know what the object is, they tap Player 3 with it and Player 3 steps out as Player 2 enters.
8. This time, Player 1’s job is to communicate through the gibberish scenes the “who,” “what,” and “where” to Player 2.
9. At the end, Player 2 taps Player 1 with it and Player 1 steps out.
10. Player 2 tells the audience what their guesses are.
11. Then Player 1 reenters and tells the audience what their guesses were.
12. Then Player 3 reenters and tells the first two what they actually were.



Here's a sample of play:

Pedro, Daniel, and Rosario are playing. Daniel and Rosario leave the room.

Pedro gets the following suggestions: Barack Obama in the library with a turtle.

- Daniel enters and begins a gibberish scene with Pedro in which Pedro is acting like Barack Obama.
- After a few moments, Pedro begins to pretend to pull books off of shelves and read them.
- Then Pedro picks up an imaginary turtle and plays with it.
- When Daniel has a guess for what Pedro is playing with, he takes it from Pedro and taps him. Pedro exits.
- Rosario enters.
- Rosario and Daniel begin a scene in gibberish, but Daniel thinks he is Abraham Lincoln.
- He plays Lincoln, speaking gibberish with Rosario for a few moments.
- Then he shows Rosario that he is in a library (Daniel guessed that one correctly).
- Next, Daniel picks up a snake.
- When Rosario guesses that the snake is a rope, she taps Daniel. Daniel exits.
- Rosario tells the audience, "It was George Washington in the library with a rope."
- Daniel reenters and says, "It was Abraham Lincoln in the library with a snake."
- Pedro reenters lets them know, "It was Barack Obama in the library with a turtle."

Vocabulary:

Audience – people watching the scene

Gibberish – "Talking gibberish" means mumbling or creating your own language, with sounds and words that you make up.