

101 Drama Games - Teachers' Conference, Oct. 15, 2010

Counting to 20

This is one of the simplest, yet most challenging drama games. Sit or stand in a circle. The idea is for the group to count to twenty, one person saying one number at a time. Anybody can start the count. Then a different person says the next number - but if two or more people happen to speak at the same time, counting must start again from the beginning. It is possible to get to twenty if everybody really concentrates - but try and be relaxed as well.

Movement Circle

One person jumps into the circle and makes a short sound with a gesture or movement. One at a time each other person jumps into the circle and repeats the sound and gesture, when it has gone full circle the next person jumps into the circle and makes a short sound with a gesture or movement, etc....

Dance Circle

*Music Required

Everyone makes a circle. One person enters the circle and begins to dance and move and move to the music. Everyone in the circle begins to imitate the person in the center. Eventually they choose another person from the circle to join them and that person must change the movement and lead the first person back into the circle. The circle begins to imitate the new person in the center, and the cycle is repeated until everyone has a turn in the middle of the circle.

Machine

One person starts with a repetitive movement and sound, a second person joins them with a repetitive movement and sound that can be combined with the first person's. Then a third person joins, then a fourth, then a fifth, then a sixth.... until a machine has been created. An Operator can be chosen to explain what the machine is, what it does, and then can control the speed of the machine, taking it from slow to fast, and eventually turning the machine off.

Ten Second Objects

Divide everyone into small groups (4-6). Call out the name of an object and all the groups have to make the shape of that object out of their own bodies, joining together in different ways while you count down slowly from ten to zero. Usually every group will find a different way of forming the object. Examples could be: a car, a fried breakfast, a clock, a washing machine, a fire.

The Expert

5 experts are selected and stand in a line in front of the class. The class then chooses a topic which the experts must discuss. The challenge is each expert can only speak one word at a time and must always talk in order, and they must try to make sense!!

Example:

Topic- Butterflies

Expert 1: Butterflies

Expert 2: are

Expert 3: sometimes

Expert 4: yellow

Expert 5: and

Expert 1: black.

TV Channels

5 volunteers are selected to be Channels, and one person is selected to be the remote control. The remote control calls out which channel they want to watch and that person begins to act something you would see on TV, at any point the remote control can switch channels and that person must start something entirely new. However if the remote control returns to a previous channel it must be something different than what was playing the last time it was on. (For an added challenge you can assign certain channels, i.e. Weather, Sports, Teletoon, etc.)

This Is...

*Requires small, everyday objects

Everyday objects (i.e. a pencil, a toothbrush, a candle) are passed around to small groups of 4 or 5. Each group must invent what the object is. It can be anything other than what it is. They must then present their re-invented object to the class and answer questions about their new creation.

Alphabet Conversation

In pairs, the students have conversations where each sentence begins with the next letter of the alphabet. If they get stuck they can use sounds to start a sentence (such as, "mmm" or "tut-tut"). Here's an example:

A: Anyone seen my cat? B: Black one, with funny eyes? A: Can't say I remember. B:

Don't tell me you've forgotten what it looks like? A: Every cat looks the same to me. B:

Fortunately, I found one yesterday

A: Gee, that's great!

Tableaux

Have the students create tableaux that tell a fairy tale, an improvised story, or re-create a news article. Tableaux provide endless opportunities to create collectively.

Warm-Up Exercise: “Hey! Whoa! Take it!”

- Everyone starts out in a circle.
- Start by sending a “Hey!” around the circle from one person to the next. Attach a hand gesture to this word as you send it around to each person.
- This action can be stopped by a “Whoa!” from the person who just received the “Hey!”. If this occurs, the ‘rejected’ person needs to send their “Hey!” the other way.
- When a “Hey!” is sent your way, you can pass it across the circle by pointing at someone and saying “Take it!”. This person then starts the “Hey!” again, or they can “Whoa!” it, or use “Take it!” to pass it across the circle some more.
- If a person uses the wrong word, wrong gesture with the word, is too slow, etc. that person is out and goes into the “soup” in the centre.

OBJECTIVES:

- focus
- teamwork
- clarity
- projection
- intent

The Ball Game - With Words

Follow the same guidelines as laid out in the handout out of “The Ball Game”, but instead of names, use words.

- At the start of the game, create a circle.
- Put single cut out words from whatever script/story/play you are working on in the middle of the circle and have each student go into the centre to pick a word.
- Have each person memorize his/her word.
- Instead of using his/her name, have each student use the words he/she chose and continue with the exercise as outlined.

Warm-up Exercise: Walk Through Circle In 5, 4, 3....

- Have the class form a circle.
- Explain that the objective is to move silently and calmly through the circle to another position in the circle in the allotted time that the teacher will call out, so that everyone ends up in a new spot, but still creating a circular formation.
- Try it first in 10, then 5, then 4, then 3 seconds.
- You will be surprised at how quickly a class can achieve this!

OBJECTIVES:

- focus
- teamwork
- listening skills

Warm-Up Exercise: Atom

- Have everyone start walking around the room. **Remind them to always keep their eyes up as there is nothing interesting on the floor and no other person down there to connect with.
- Do this in silence first, then have people start to greet each other.
- Add the fact that each person is late for an appointment so that pace quickens and the intent is focused and concentrated.
- Call out a number and have the students get into a group of that number as quickly as possible.
- It is best to request silence throughout this entire exercise.
- Repeat this step but call out a new number.
- Next call out a number, let them create a group with that many people, then call out an object and have them create it as a team in total silence
 - Ex. Umbrella, boat, kettle.....
- Have them walk around a third time, then call a new number again. Give them an image to create in silence while using their bodies in the same way they did with the object. Use a quotable image from a play or story that you are working on
 - Ex. “star-crossed lovers”, ‘cupid’s buttshaft”, “graves all gaping wide”.

OBJECTIVES:

- teamwork
- listening and responding
- initiation and impulse work
- imagination
- focus

Choral Reading

- Divide the group into two groups and give each group a copy of half of a speech/poem that you have chosen.
- Discuss the power of pause, repetition, use of vowels/consonants, sound effects, echoing, etc. and encourage them to explore all of this in their choral exploration.
- Give them time to work on this as a group.
- Have the team that is listening first take note of the cue line (the last line they will hear from the other group) so that they know when to start reading out loud themselves.
- Have this group shut their eyes while the other group performs their choral reading.
- Have the group that just read close their eyes to listen, as the second group begins when the cue line is heard.
- You can repeat this exercise more than once, using 4 or 6 groups and going through the piece 2 or 3 times in a row
- After the reading is done, get students to grab a paper and markers and find a place to work privately where they will draw images that stood out to them in the piece they just heard.
- Get together as a group and discuss sounds, drawings, what stood out and why.

OBJECTIVES:

- text exploration
- teamwork
- listening
- speaking out loud
- visual exploration

Insult/Wooing Game

- Choose insult lines or wooing lines from whatever piece is being worked on with your class.
- Get each student to choose an insult/wooing line.
- Line the students up facing each other in two rows.
- Start at one end and have the student deliver his/her line to the person opposite him/her using conviction, movement, and anything at all to help deliver the message.
- Have the person who just received this line, now deliver theirs to the person across from them (diagonally) that has not gone at all yet, and so on down the two lines until everyone has received an insult/compliment and has given one.

OBJECTIVES:

- commitment to text
- emotional exploration
- listening
- public speaking

Song Styles

- Choose a piece of text or a song from whatever you are working on with your class.
- Have the class split into four or five groups.
- Assign a song style to each group - ex. Country, rock, pop, jazz, opera.
- Have each group work on their own to create their own version of this “song” using the assigned style and text.
- Share with the entire class.

OBJECTIVES:

- get text into the students’ mouths and head
- group work
- projection and commitment