

Improvisation Starters

What Are You Doing?



Let's Explore Improvisation

This activity combines all the elements of improvisation that have been introduced throughout the Improvisation Starters course. It is a great way to generate scenes for play building.

What do you need?

- An open space (this could be a classroom with desks cleared, a school gym or a tennis court)
- Drama Journal Template

Why are we doing this

Through these activities, we are beginning to understand and refine what makes good drama.

The aim is to work together as a team, listen to and watch your classmates, and to think creatively.

This is also a great activity for developing confidence in performing in front of others.

It can be a starting point to begin creating short scenarios or scenes.

The steps of the game

1. Form a circle.
2. Choose a student to go into the centre of the circle.
3. This student (Student A) mimes an activity, eg digging a hole.
4. After they have established their mime ask them to 'freeze'.
5. The person to their left in the circle (Student B) approaches them and asks "What are you doing?"
6. Student A responds with a completely different activity that justifies the position they are in. For example, if they are reaching up they might say "I'm trying to catch a balloon."
7. Student B joins Student A and they mime the new activity together.
8. Student A leaves and returns to their position in the circle. The next person (Student C) then enters and asks Student B "What are you doing?"
9. The activity continues like this until everyone in the circle has had a turn.

Now let's try something new

1. Get into groups of 3 or 4 students.
2. In your groups, select a 'dramatic action' which came out of the activity 'What Are You Doing?' For example:

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- Making a daisy chain
 - Digging a hole
 - Fishing
3. Now, spend 2-3 minutes improvising a short scene where there is a moment of conflict or tension. For example:
- A dog enters and eats the daisy chain
 - You discover a gold nugget under the ground
 - A giant fish is caught and the fishing boat tips
4. Perform your work.

Don't forget

Complete the Drama Journal Template, with your favourite idea, what you have learned, or could work on.

What have you learned?

- How can you think you can refine your performance for next time?
- Discuss what worked and why with the class?
- Discuss the benefits of commenting on each other's performance. What did you learn?