

Drama 1

Ensemble

Educational Objective: The students will demonstrate their ability to work together by accomplishing a giant task as a group.

Materials Needed: None

Hook: Show a video clip of a group of actors who work well together (Ex. Monty Python or SNL) and/or show a clip of an actor who steals a scene (Jim Carey).

Step 1: Have the students stand in a circle. Position yourself in the center of the circle, point to a student, and say the word "rabbit", "duck" or "elephant." It takes three students to make an animal. The student you pointed to must start by creating the first part of the animal (like buck teeth, a bill, or a trunk) and then the two students to either side of him make appendages like elephant ears, webbed feet, and rabbit ears. The team only has 5 seconds to create the animal. Let everyone participate at least once and then make it a competition. Any student failing to create his/her part of the animal under five seconds is out. Play until there are only three students left. They are the winners.

Step 2: Discussion. Explain that if actors are not working together, they are working against one another. Actors who showboat, or steal focus do a disservice to the actors who are trying to create a well-developed scene. Really listen. Practice give and take. Working together well takes time and practice to develop. Try to establish a physical and mental link with the others.

Step 3: Interview exercise: Get three volunteers. One student will be the interviewer and the other two will be interviewed at the same time. They are twins and must answer the same words at the same time. It will help if they are looking at each other while they answer. Have everyone participate.

Step 4: Have all the students stand in a circle. Provide a subject for a story (like in the jungle, sports, cooking, etc). Moving around the circle, the group must tell a story. Each student must contribute one word to the story. They must indicate pronunciation by their inflections. Go around the circle as fast as possible until the story is complete. Try several stories.

Step 5: Have one student stand in front of the class and perform a simple repetitive action and making a corresponding sound. The action should look like a part of some giant machine. Another student then joins the first by becoming another part of the same machine with motion and sound. The process continues until 8 to 10 students have joined together to build an interesting machine. Have everyone play the game.

Step 6: Tell the students that they will now all have to work together to accomplish a giant task. Split them into groups of five or so. Have the first group stand in the performing area and assign them a giant task (lifting a gigantic rock and carrying it across the room, flip a ten foot pancake, help a giant's baby put a coat on, build a recreation of the Statue of Liberty, etc.) They may talk but don't let them discuss a head of time. They have one minute to complete the task. Time them. Have each group perform.

Step 7: Discuss the difficulties in the exercises. Why is trust important to create a meaningful scene? How long do you think it will take to become an efficient team?