

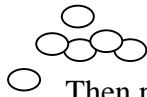
Mirror to Scenes

Educational Objective: The students will demonstrate their ability to quickly create characters and use them in a scene by performing several mirror focus exercises.

Materials Needed: Different styles of music.

Hook: Have everyone stand in a circle. Play “Word Connections.” Start by saying any word. The person to your right then says another word which was inspired by the word before. It could rhyme or sound like or just makes a connection. It must be inspired only by the word right before. Go around the circle about 3 times. Play again but this time they can be inspired by any word they hear.

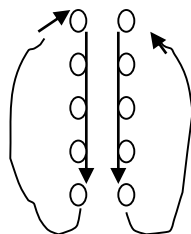
Step 1: You’ll need a large space. This exercise is called “Dance Pyramid.” Put the players (any number) in a pyramid or triangle formation all facing the top of the triangle. Like so:



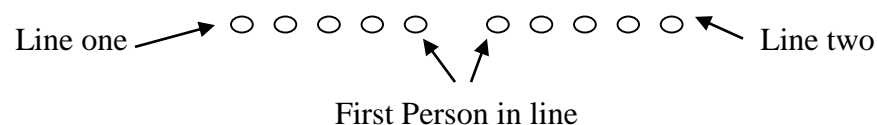
Put everyone in the formation. Then play some music. Have the person in the top of the triangle move to the music; some kind of repetitive motion or dance. The person can change his motion too. Do whatever the music inspires. Now, **THIS IS IMPORTANT:** Everyone else only watches the row in front of them. They do not watch the point man (except for the second row). They follow and copy the row in front of them. Then, when someone (anyone in the pyramid) feels inspired to break off they do by running to another corner of the room and starts another dance or motion. Everyone who sees or senses someone split off must follow. So eventually the whole group will go. Then someone else splits off and the group follows that person. Switch the music so different things happen. Play until they’ve had enough.

Step 2: Have everyone get a partner. And make two lines facing your partner. Mirror your partner. Both follow, both lead. Anything goes.

Step 3: Keep the lines. Play Music. Everyone still mirrors, now to the music, but the two at the front of the line will travel behind the lines (still mirroring) and get to the back of the line and the whole line moves up. In this pattern:



Step 4: Now have the two lines line up single file facing the other line but only the front two can see each other. Like this:



Play music. Have the two people in the front of the line mirror each other to the music. The people behind them must only watch the person in front of them and try to copy them exactly. After about 10 seconds, send the two front people to the back of their lines.

Step 5: Form an audience. Have two people mirror each other on stage and then start a scene when they feel they are ready. They can break the mirroring once they have started the scene. Have everyone do this.

Step 6: Explain that as soon as a scene falls flat or you don't know how to start use one of the following to kick start it:

I think...

I feel...

I want...

Have everyone perform a scene with a partner by starting it with one of those starters.

Step 7: Explain that if someone makes an outlandish choice in a scene you must play it straight. Be real. Give everyone a slip of paper. Have them write down a wild or weird situation which might happen at a restaurant for one character to play. Have two people come up and do a scene in a restaurant. One player draws a slip and plays the suggestion while the other plays it straight. Have everyone perform.

Step 8: Play "You Are One Of Us Now." Start by having everyone just walk around the space. At random grab someone and put your hands on his shoulders and say menacingly, "You are one of us now!" Repeat it until he starts saying it with you and he puts his hands on your shoulders. Then the two of you move to someone else and "absorb" her, making part of your group and saying, "You are one of us now!" Absorb others! Absorb as many as possible like an amoeba. When the group is too big, break off by make some sound effect and using one hand to cut the group in half. Now there are two groups being absorbing people. Then maybe three, four, five until everyone is absorbed and all the groups absorb into one big one with everyone saying, "You Are One Of Us Now." Ask what the point was. Everyone realizes that it is everyone is included in improvisation.

Step 9: Play "Hard Professions." This is a good exercise to show that you can always talk about something even if you know nothing about it. Explain that we are B.S. artists. We can make up stuff and lies about anything. Have two people share the stage. Have the audience give them a profession that they would know nothing about. Give them 30 seconds to think about anything they know about the profession. They act as a team. Giving and taking the spotlight. Have the audience ask them questions about their profession. They just give B.S. answers. Have them all perform.

Step 10: Play "The Character Wheel." Make a back line of 6 people. One comes out front and chooses a character. He makes him up as much as he can in his mind in 30 seconds. Then the audience asks 10 questions of him. He answers as his character. The back line listens. Each person in the back line is assigned a number. You hold up a number with your fingers of which player should come out and do a scene with first player as a character he would have met at sometime during his life. Could be family, a friend, or a stranger.