

Surprise

Scenic Improv

Grades 11-12 & up

Educational Objective: The students will demonstrate their ability to create surprise in the context of their scenes by performing several improvised scenes and following the concept of surprise.

Materials Needed: None.

Hook: Have two people come up and perform the first few lines of a scene with a one word suggestion from the audience – Instruct them to not use any context.

Step 1: Now have the audience decide on a “how.” How should they say these lines? Have them perform again with the how. Then have the audience decide on more context – where they are and what they are doing. Have them perform now with this new information. Discuss the context that has been created. Have one person explain the context in one sentence. For example: They are happily talking about bowling while they are robbing a bank.

Step 2: Have the two performing continue the scene but they must stay in the context of the scene. Explain that this is their road map. It is their guide. Once they have their context and how they have something to follow and should never get stuck. Put everyone in pairs and have them each do a scene following the concepts just learned.

Step 3: Now explain the concept of surprise. Surprise is doing something unexpected. Many times it is opposite of what is expected. Have a pair come up and improvise the first few lines of a scene with out context. Now give them a sarcastic how. Have them do it again sarcastically. Now put the scene in the middle of surgery where they don’t really care about the patient as much as their conversation. Have them perform. Now ask them to state the context of the scene in one sentence. Now they have the context (being sarcastic is more important than the operation). Ask the class what are some other things that could happen that would stay in the context of the scene (examples – another patient, another conversation, another doctor, medical equipment, etc.). Now discuss how to make surprises. What is something that could happen in the context of the scene that would be unexpected? (examples – Not washing for the next patient, an organ fight, hosing down the operating table, blood squirting contest, etc.) have them perform the rest of the scene by creating surprises. We want to see some more sarcastic bad surgery.

Step 4: Now have everyone perform an entire scene from a one word suggestion by creating context, following the context, and creating surprises. Everyone performs.

Step 5: Discuss what they learned. What are their concerns? What did they like or dislike?