



AXIS THEATRE

Description:

Introductory workshop into the world of Physical Theatre for young participants (preschool to grade four). This is an introductory workshop taught by cast members of Axis Theatre Company. Together participants will explore a variety of physical theatre exercises and games providing the basic foundation for performing in a theatre production. Games and exercises will help stretch your imagination and offer a glimpse into the world of improvisation & collective creation.

Participants will learn about plot and character development, story structure, and how to physically play them on stage. All exercises, including work in character development, lead to improvisations that are performed in front of the class. This workshop is designed for young people who want to play, have fun and learn new skills in physical theatre in a safe and supportive environment.

A few examples of games and exercises:

Warm up

Body and Voice stretch and move on the spot

Some tongue twisters are always fun

Red Leather Blue Leather Yellow Leather

Unique New York

The big blue bug bit the big brown bear and bled blue blood.

1. Mirror Twins

Split the children into pairs and choose one from each pair to be the mirror. On your signal, the other children can start moving slowly in any way they wish. Their 'mirror' must copy their movements as closely as they can, so that they look like a reflection in a mirror. When the time feels right, pause the game for a moment to have the children swap so everyone has a go at leading and mirroring.

The game can be expanded by giving the children different prompts. For example, you could have them be a character from a story or take on a role they often see in the world (like a construction worker or a dancer). You can also specify the situation they're in (e.g. underwater, at the North Pole, in the jungle).

2. Yes, Let's!

Everyone gets to take a turn at being the leader in this game. All you have to do is suggest an activity by calling out "let's" and then the activity you have in mind. For example, "let's build sandcastles" or "let's explore a cave." Whenever a suggestion is called out, everyone replies with "yes, let's!" Then the group starts acting the suggestion out. At any time, anyone can call out a new suggestion, and the scene can change. This is great for building confidence and creativity as every idea is met with "Yes, let's!"

3. Teleporting

Have the children spread out around the room and give them an environment to start off in. You could have them start at the playground, on a spaceship or at the beach. They then get to play-act as though they are really in this setting.

Every so often, announce that they are about to teleport and then give them a new environment to explore. It's a good idea to create contrast with each shift. For example, you might have them at a Wiggles concert one minute and then a library the next. This activity is a lot of fun, but it also gets children thinking about different environments and the actions and behaviors that fit certain contexts – an important skill both in theatre and in life.

4. Anything But!

Take an object (long umbrella for example) and make it into anything but an umbrella. One person at a time goes up on stage, the others guess what the object is and if they have an idea, they put up their hand. The leader chooses them. If they get it right, they get to go up and make something new out of the umbrella.

Make it into a fishing rod, a telescope, a trombone, a walking cane, a guitar, a flute. and NO TALKING.

5. Toy Store

All the students are a type of toy - a doll, a stuffed bear, a toy soldier, a space astronaut. It's nighttime and the shopkeepers put the toys on display moving them into interesting positions. Once the job is done the shopkeepers leave for the night. The toys come to life and play around. BUT the shopkeepers forget something and come back to the store, the toys FREEZE once the shopkeepers enter the store. They discover all the toys have moved, so they put them back into position. They leave again and the toys come to life again, the shopkeepers return and the toys FREEZE not wanting to be caught. If they are caught moving at all the shopkeepers execute the toys by ripping off their tiny heads!

6. Lemon Aide

One student goes up and does an action - mime - (painting a fence for example) others join in doing something similar but different (saw wood, hammer a nail, dig a hole).

Once all the students are up, or all the ones that want to go up, the leader makes them all go faster in their actions, then slower then freeze, then faster, then slower. A new student goes up and does something different like - play a violin, others join in as a conductor, stand up bass, another violin and once all are up the leader makes them go faster, slower, freeze...Again NO TALKING.

7. What are you Doing?

In a circle one student is doing an action (petting a dog for example) one at a time a student will ask that student "What are you doing?" the student petting the dog will say something different like "Sewing on a patch". The new student will start sewing on a patch, then a new student asks "What are you doing?" the person sewing on a patch will say "skydiving" etc....

8. Mime Box

In the middle of the room is an invisible box. A student will stand beside the box then mime an object - "a deck of playing cards" for example, if the other students guess it that student puts "the deck of cards" in the invisible box someone else comes up and mimes something else like a "flying pan" for example etc.. Again NO TALKING.

9. What Just Happened?

One student will go out of the room, the others will create a giant tableaux of something that has just happened. The student will reenter the room and try to guess what just happened? Examples - A meteor just hit the earth, a bride just ran away from the groom at the church, a zombie apocalypse outbreak just happened.