

Improvisation - Introduction

Hello, my name is Louise peacock and I'm Head of Drama to DeMontfort University in England. As part of the creativity project, I ran a workshop on using skills drawn from improv to help young people develop skills in spontaneity and adaptability, which can help with both communication and creativity. The workshop was divided into three activities, and the videos for those activities can be found below.

Improvisation - Activity One

The first activity focuses on adaptability and spontaneity. If you're working as part of a group, get into pairs. In pairs label yourselves A and B and for the moment A is the leader. A can make physical gestures, which B must try to mirror as closely as possible. A is leading, and B is following. When you've tried that for a little while, swap over so that B becomes the leader and A becomes the follower. The next stage of this exercise is to try to pass the leadership backwards and forwards between you without talking about it. Simply recognising when one of you is following and the other one is leading and how that might be swapped. The next section of this activity is to get into a large circle. One person makes an action or gesture, which is passed all around the circle and each person can choose whether to repeat the action or whether to change the action. Try as a group to change it and adapt it as many times as you can.

If you're working on your own, you'll need to hop over to the other videos which we've provided as prompts for you to do these kinds of activities by yourself.

Improvisation - Activity Two

The second activity in this workshop focuses on status, and we might think of status as the way that we appear to other people and whether they think that we are confident or nervous, whether we own a space or whether we seem shy and uncomfortable. And so this exercise is designed to get you thinking about status, and adjusting the way that you present yourself so that you might appear more confident. This includes things like body language, facial expression, tones of voice and use of gesture. The first exercise requires a chair. The person doing the exercise leaves the room and comes back in to say the phrase, 'I'm sorry I'm late', once they reach the chair. So they leave the room, they walk in, sit down and say 'I'm sorry I'm late'. The way that they say 'I'm sorry, I'm late' depends on which status they've been given. If Somebody's running the workshop, they can have cards labelled one to ten. Ten is very high status, super confident and not really apologetic at all and one is the absolute lowest status, so nervous and apologetic for being late that they can barely make it to sit down on the chair. Carry out the

exercise using a range of different statuses and talk to each other about what you're responding to and what you're reacting to, and how you see people as being confident or not confident.

Improvisation - Activity Three

The third activity in this session is an interview improvisation and the first step of this exercise is to divide up into pairs and go away and write a list of questions that you think might be asked in an interview. You could decide for example, whether the interview is for an educational course, or for a job. Spend some time generating a detailed list of questions. Once you have a list of questions, go back into the main group, and then choose some volunteers to be both the interviewer and the interviewee. You can do this exercise as many times as you like responding to different questions, pairing people in different ways. But what it will do is give you the opportunity to practice how to behave in an interview setting. You can think about the status activity that you carried out before. So think about the way that you enter the space. Think about the way that you sit on the chair. Think about the way that you make eye contact with the person interviewing you. You can practice this as many times as you like so that you start to feel more and more confident about how you might behave if you were in an interview. If you're working by yourself, there are some video prompts of questions for you to respond to, to give you practice in carrying out an interview by yourself.