

Improvised scenes - a dramatic activity

On your marks:

Ideas for presenting a sketch.

Get set:

It's great fun to go into a group and have five minutes to prepare a short play springing from a theme or story. But sometimes it helps to work within guidelines to get a crisper, more watchable, less straggly result. In this idea, we're not talking about performance plays, but about ideas for improvisations within drama workshops, which will only be watched by other members of the group - process rather than product.

Go!

Give the outline or title or characters for the sketch the groups are to make up, and set one of these limitations:

- You've got 5 minutes (or whatever) to rehearse this.
- Specify a first line and/or a last line for the sketch.
- It must start and/or end with a question.
- Each character is only allowed to say one line.
- Each character can only say one line, but can repeat it as many times as s/he needs to.
- Every character must say at least one line and no more than three lines.
- It must be in mime.
- It must be in mime with sound effects.
- It must be tell the story with nothing but sound effects.
- It must show the situation first with one reaction from the protagonists and the consequences of this, then the same situation but with the opposite reaction and consequences. (e.g. A new girl comes to school. Show first a way you shouldn't treat her, then a good way to treat her.)
- It must include (an object)

Helpful questions to ask the 'audience' afterwards might be along the lines of: What did you like best about their play? What could they improve if they had more time?

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