



46 free
DRAMA
GAMES &
ACTIVITIES



for PRIMARY

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Mrs. B's
DRAMA TRUNK

46 FREE DRAMA GAMES + ACTIVITIES for Primary School



1, 2, 1

1, 2, 1 is a great vocal warm up game that is also good for focus and also teaches vocal rhythm. It is suitable for middle elementary (primary) school and high school. I like to use this game when talking about articulation and using voice and discuss the importance of vocal warm-ups with students.

Players: This is a whole class circle drama game and can be played with small or large groups.

How to play: In a circle, first teach the basic chant / number rhythm. Students all chant at the same time. The pitch gets higher with higher numbers and lowers slightly for the lower numbers. The first number should start mid-tone. It is done like a vocal (singing) scale activity but does not require singing training (or a good voice!).

The chant

1
1, 2, 1
1, 2, 3, 2, 1
1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Practice the sequence until students are comfortable. It should get to a nice pace.

Extension: Once you have completed the above rhythm, do it again but after getting

to the final 1, switch to 8 and start counting downwards. There will be a difference in pitch from 1 - 8 and this is where it is most noticeable.

E.g. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 8

8, 7, 8

8, 7, 6, 7, 8

8, 7, 6, 5, 6, 7, 8

8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Further extension: Take out 1 or 2 numbers and replace with claps. Repeat the rhythm with the claps. For example - replace 3 and 6 with claps

1

1, 2, 1

1, 2, clap, 2, 1

1, 2, clap, 4, clap, 2, 1

1, 2, clap, 4, 5, 4, clap, 2, 1

1, 2, clap, 4, 5, clap, 5, 4, clap, 2, 1

1, 2, clap, 4, 5, clap, 7, clap, 5, 4, clap, 2, 1

1, 2, clap, 4, 5, clap, 7, 8, 7, clap, 5, 4, clap, 2, 1

You can also go backwards with the same clap sequence.

3 NOSES

A fun physical warm up, promoting group cooperation

Players: This is a whole class activity where students walk around the whole drama space.

How to play:

Students walk around the room. Teacher shouts out “3 noses” and the students must form groups with 3 touching noses. Call out different things for students to create groups with.

Examples (you can add in left or right to these also i.e. 10 left thumbs)

- 5 belly buttons
- 4 big toes
- 10 thumbs
- 3 ears
- 3 knees
- 4 elbows
- 2 cheeks

7 UP

7 UP is a drama warm up to get students loosened up. It is a very simple activity and useful for play rehearsals or a physical warm up before performances.

Players: This is a whole class circle drama game and can be played with small or large groups.

How to play: In a circle, everyone counts to 7 while waving one arm up and down to the same rhythm as the counting. When the group reaches 7, do the same thing with the other arm, both legs, head and ankles (or whatever part of the body you want to warm up - make sure if you do the head, it is carefully). After the group has finished the sets of 7, do them all again, counting up to 6, then 5 and on on until the set is down to 1, 1, 1, 1, 1. The sets should be in the same order but get faster as the numbers count down.

Full body shake

Once the group has done the individual parts of their bodies - do a full body booty shake. This is fun to add in especially when the numbers start getting lower.

Hokey Pokey

Don't forget the silly and oft left to young children 'hokey pokey'. Sometimes I like to add the hokey pokey (parts of it) to this warm up.

ACCEPTANCE CIRCLE

ACCEPTANCE CIRCLE is one of the best drama games (in my opinion). It's an absolute favourite and a good activity to teach accepting. It's just really fun. It may take a few turns for the class to warm up to it.

Players: This is a whole class circle drama game and can be played with medium or large groups.

How to play: Students stand in a circle. The teacher (or a student) does an action with accompanying sound (larger is best). The next student in the circle has to copy the movement and sound and so forth around the circle. Try to get the game to a nice pace.

Rules:

- Students must copy the movement and sound that the person before them makes, NOT copy the original movement and sound.
- If someone makes a mistake, laughs or forgets something, clears their throat, shrugs etc... the action will have changed and it is up to the next person in the circle to copy EXACTLY what has happened before them, mistakes and all. This is where the game gets funny.

ALIEN, TIGER, COW

Warm up game encouraging the whole class to work together and build awareness of everyone else in the class.

Players: This is a whole class circle game.

How to play:

- In a circle, teach and practice 3 actions / sounds
 - **ALIEN:** index fingers on head (like antenna's) and say "bleep bleep"
 - **TIGER:** right hand forward making a clawing action and "roar"
 - **COW:** hands on stomach with 2 fingers pointing out (like an udder), leaning forward and saying "moo"
- On the teachers cue, each student decides to become 1 of the 3 (either an alien, tiger or cow). The group with the least amount of students is out and must sit in the middle of the circle (e.g. 10 aliens, 7 tigers and 5 cows – the cows would be out).

Variation: Also in a circle, the objective is for everyone to become the same thing at the same time. On the teachers cue, students become either an alien, tiger or cow. Keep practicing until everyone is in sync – this won't happen straight away.

ALPHABET CIRCLE

A good game for concentration.

Players: This is a whole class circle activity.

Played quickly.

In a circle, students try to get to the end of the alphabet. The teacher starts by "throwing" an "A" to a student. To begin with the letter should accompany a throwing/pointing action. The student then throws a "B" to someone else and so forth until the group reaches "Z". Try to go as fast as possible

- Split the group into 2 teams and have a competition to see who can get to the end of the alphabet first
- You can use a ball for this activity but pointing should be sufficient
- For more advanced classes, remove the throwing/pointing action and have students throw the letters with "eye contact" only
- You can switch the alphabet for numbers and see what you can count up to.

ASSOCIATION WALKING

Students begin to use word associations in a fun way

This is a great activity for younger students to practice word associations. Students stand in a straight line. The teacher calls out various words (ice cream; dinner; Olympics; jungle animals etc...) and the students call out words that they can think of. For every word, students get to take a step. Instruct students not to take huge steps! When they reach one side of the room, they can then walk back (if you want to keep playing).

BALL PASS MIME

BALL PASS MIME is a good circle mime activity to develop pantomime skills and is also a good warm up and focus activity. It's suitable for all drama skill levels and suitable for middle elementary / primary (years 3 or 4) up to the end of high school.

You may like these:



Players: This is a whole class circle drama game and can be played with small or large groups.

How to play:

- In a circle, students pass a mimed ball to each other (only one ball at a time).
- The teacher starts the activity, showing the size of the ball.
- As the game progresses, the teacher adds in additional instructions and students respond to the instructions as the game continues, catching and throwing the ball as if it has taken on the new characteristics.
- Encourage and demonstrate effective pantomime skills.

Mime ball characteristics:

- The ball becomes heavier and heavier (until it is really heavy)
- The ball becomes lighter and lighter (until it is light as a feather)
- The ball becomes smaller (until it is tiny and it may also be light or heavy and small)
- The ball becomes bigger and bigger (until it is huge and it may also be light or heavy)
- The ball becomes slippery
- The ball becomes sticky
- The ball becomes hotter / colder
- The ball becomes spiky

BALL COUNT

BALL COUNT is not technically a drama game but it's a fun team building game to get groups up and moving and working together. It is also fun to try to beat class records.

Players: This is a whole class game and can be played with small or large groups. It can be played in a circle or with students spread out across the room.

How to play:

- You will need a soft ball to play.
- In small groups or as the entire class, students must keep the ball in the air for as long as possible.
- Each time the ball is bounced back into the air, the whole group must count out 1, 2, 3, 4 etc.
- Aim for a target number and try to beat old class records.

Rules

- The same person can only hit the ball up once in a row.
- The ball is not to touch the ground or walls at all.

BING

BING is a fast paced and fun circle drama warm up which is good for focus.

Players: This is a whole class circle drama game and can be played with medium or large groups.

How to play:

- In a circle. Pass a "WHOOSH" around the circle in one direction, making a clapping point action with both hands.
- Once students are comfortable and the speed of the "whoosh" is faster, stop the "whoosh" and add a "bing" doing the same action but in the opposite direction and saying "BING".
- Practice sending the "BING" around the circle.
- Once students are comfortable you will send a "WHOOSH" around the circle one way at the same time you send a "BING" in the opposite direction.

Extension: You can add other sounds to this. You could add a 'zap' which goes across the circle.

Hints: Try to make it as fast as possible. I like this game for medium sized groups as I find if the group is too large, the game is too slow.

BIPPITY, BIPPITY, BOP

Bippity Bop (or "Bippity Bippity Bop") is one of my all time favourite drama games, perfect for a group warm up or end of class activity. This is a quick paced Drama Game perfect for fun and concentration

For more drama games:



Players: This is a whole class circle drama game. It is suitable for medium to large groups.

How to play:

- When first playing this game, the teacher should practice each part before adding them all together into the full game.
- BIPPITY BIPPITY BOP: The teacher says "BIPPITY BIPPITY BOP" (quickly) while pointing at a student and the student who is being pointed at must say "BOP" before the teacher finishes saying the line. The trick here is to say "Bippity Bippity Bop" as quickly as possible.
- BOP: The teacher says "BOP" while pointing at a student and the student must say nothing. If the student pointed at starts to say "bop" or anything else, they are out.
- The trick here is to get a good, fast flow to the game and to catch students out saying "bop" because the game is moving so quickly. Once objects are added in, the trick is to get students moving quickly and then catching them out on the "bop".

Bippity Bop Objects: Choose as many of the following objects to also add to the Bippity Bop Game. Teacher points at a student and calls out an object, and that student and the two students either side must quickly react to form the object before the teacher counts down 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. It is suggested that you only use 1 or 2 extra things for the first time you play and get students used to the game by

introducing 1 rule at a time (start by practicing “bippity bippity bop” then “bop” then add objects). If the students don’t react and create the object in time, they are out.

- **ELEPHANT:** The student being pointed at makes an elephant trunk with their arms (and an elephant noise if you like) and the 2 people on either side must quickly become the elephant ears, shaping their arms on either side of the trunk.
- **WASHING MACHINE:** The student in the middle “spins” as the two students either side create the walls of the washing machine
- **AIRPLANE:** The student in the middle becomes the pilot, holding their hands to their eyes in a goggle shape. The two students either side become the plane wings, pointing outwards.
- **TOASTER:** The student in the middle becomes the toast and the two students either side become the outside of the toaster. All three must duck down and the toast ‘pops up’ from the middle of the toaster.
- **ROLLERCOASTER:** One student kneels in front, the middle student ‘sits’ in the middle and the third student stands behind. The middle student must put their arms up in the air and “scream” while the rollercoaster moves backwards, forwards, sideways.
- **HAWAII:** Middle student does the hula and the 2 students either side become palm trees swaying in the wind.
- **CAR:** Middle student takes the wheel of the car and “beep beeps” and the two students either side become the windscreen wipers.

BODY HIDE

BODY HIDE is a fun team building activity. It's not technically a drama game but it's good for the drama classroom and is good to use as a warm up or wind down in physical theatre lessons.

Players: This is a whole class drama activity played in groups of 4-6

How to play:

- In a In groups of 4 – 6, students must ‘hide’ one of the group members with their bodies.
- The teacher and audience try to see pieces of the hidden person (shoes, an ear etc) and call out what they can see as the group adapts to hide the whole person.

Extension: When the group succeeds, remove a person so they have to hide the person with 4, 3, 2 students.

DRAMA FREEZES

DRAMA FREEZES are vital to drama activities and performances. Here are some drama freezes to practice creating

Players: This drama activity is suitable for all sized groups.

Hints for drama freezes:

- For new groups, I like to have students 'shake things out' and practice just stopping on the spot before adding characters.
- When practicing drama freezes I like announce the freeze and then count students in 3, 2, 1. I find that it is better to get students thinking and moving

characters and situations.

You may like these:



quickly into freezes.

Scenario drama freezes

- *You have just seen superman flying in the sky*
- *You have just been splashed with mud*
- *You are pointing to something interesting*
- *You have a stomach ache*
- *You are modelling for a photo shoot*
- *You are being chased by a lion*
- *You are in the middle of a big dance move*
- *You are about to crash into something*
- *You are looking up at a giant*
- *You are getting dressed*
- *You are eating messy spaghetti*
- *You just stubbed your toe*
- *You are singing in the shower*

Or try these character freezes:

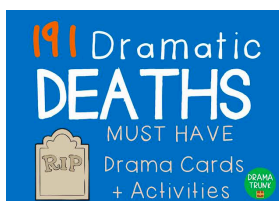
- *Police Officer*
- *Ticket Inspector*
- *Body Guard*
- *Principal*
- *Businessman / woman*
- *Burglar*

Extension: "Freeze and Go". Ask students to create a freeze and count them in to ACTION. On ACTION, students have to walk, move and talk or make sounds like the character or in reaction to the situation.

DRAMATIC DEATHS

DRAMATIC DEATHS is an absolute favourite for drama students and great for improvisation and creative scene writing skills.

You may like these:



Players: This is a scene creation drama activity that works well in groups of 3 to 4.

Instructions for this drama activity:

- In small groups, students must create a "dramatic death" scene where a character (or more than one) dies a dramatic death.
- The teacher gives students a "death by" (i.e. chocolate) and the students must come up with a creative scene.
- The scenes should have a beginning, middle and end and students should be encouraged to freeze at the end. I think scenes are best kept short (1-2 minutes in length).

Time to devise

- Do not give students an overly long time to come up with and rehearse their scenes. While this is not an 'improv' or on the spot activity, I have always tried to push students to commit to decisions quickly. I find this helps them overall with creative idea generation (and it stops them getting so stuck on ideas). I would give students max 10-15 minutes to come up with and rehearse their scenes before performance. They do not need to over rehearse the scene prior to performance but they should come up with the plot, characters and order.

EVOLUTION

Play 'paper rock scissors' in a drama game way. A silly drama game that will get students moving around.

For more drama games:



Players: This is a whole class drama game. It is suitable for medium to large groups and is played in any part of the drama space (but students need to be able to move around a little bit).

How to play:

- Students play 'paper rock scissors' to evolve to the next stage. They should say the words 'rock paper scissors' while playing.

Evolutionary stages:

1. **EGG:** All students start as an egg. They must crouch down and find another "egg" to play "paper, rock, scissors" with. Once they win, they move to the next evolutionary stage. If they lose, they must find another egg to play. There should be 1 egg stuck as an egg at the end of the game.
2. **CHICKEN:** Students must take on the characteristics of a chicken and "cluck" around the space, walking like a chicken (with their arms shaped like wings). Chickens must play other chickens and win "paper rock scissors" to move to the next evolutionary stage. Match losers must find another chicken to play. There should be 1 chicken left at the end of the game.
3. **MONKEY:** Students must take on the characteristics of a monkey and 'oooh oooh ahhh ahh' as they look for another monkey to play. Monkeys play monkeys in 'rock paper scissors' to move to the next evolutionary stage.
4. **DINOSAUR:** Students must stand up and 'roar' like a dinosaur, moving like a TRex type dinosaur (with claws). They must play other dinosaurs.
5. **STOP IN THE NAME OF LOVE:** For the last stage (once they move on from dinosaur), I like to have students line up on a line and start singing the tune "Stop, in the name of love, before you break my heart. Think it over". Students are taught simple actions to go along with the song (hand forward on "stop"; move that hand around to the side on "in the name of love"; pointing forward on "before you"; breaking action with both hands on "break my heart" and rolling arms on "think it over"). It's a nice last evolutionary stage as it adds a choral song and nice energy to the game. Students repeat the tune until the game ends. The game ends when there is only one of each evolutionary stages left.

Change the evolutionary stages as you like and reorder if you prefer. I've seen aliens used also.

EXAGGERATION CIRCLE

EXAGGERATION CIRCLE is a silly warm up drama game where students practice exaggerated gestures.

Players: This is a whole class circle drama game and can be played with small or large groups.

How to play:

- Students stand in a circle and the teacher explains that the aim of this game is to create exaggerated gestures.

- The teacher starts the game by doing a simple gesture. The next student in the circle must make the gesture a little more exaggerated.
- Students continue around the circle, making the gesture more and more exaggerated until it is completely over the top.
- Students should focus on exaggerating the gesture, not changing it completely!

Extension: add a sound to the gesture.

EXPERT DOUBLE FIGURES

A funny improv game and must have in any drama repertoire. Players must react to the addition of arms in their developing improvisation. It can be played with advanced older elementary (primary) students but is better for middle to high school students with some improv skills.

Players: This is an improv scene that is played with 4 players (2 players play the arms and 2 players play the characters).

How to play:

- 4 players take the stage. Two players are allocated the roles of the 'arms', one student is the 'interviewer' and one student is the 'expert'.
- The interviewer and expert sit on a chair next to each other and put their arms behind their backs. The 'arms' kneel behind the chairs and put their arms through the gap between the bodies of the two players in the chairs. The effect is that the arms of the interviewer and expert are played by the other two players.
- The interviewer welcomes the audience to the show and introduces an expert guest who is "here to talk about...." The expert discusses their strange expertise and then interviewer asks questions.
- The arms must work with their partners, reacting to the dialogue and making appropriate gestures with their hands.

Hint: Choose a confident player for the interviewer role the first time. The interviewer is important to keep the scene moving along. This should be explained to them before the game starts.

Extension: Encourage students to get out of their chairs and take their 'arms' with them.

Expert ideas:

- Expert on snail racing
- Expert at doing the 'chicken dance'
- Expert at cactus growing
- Expert at staring contests
- Expert of aliens
- Expert of bells
- Expert of Christmas tree decorating

FINGERTIPS

FINGERTIPS is a great trust building game that can be adapted for the drama

Players: This game is played in the whole drama space (which should be cleared) in pairs.

How to play:

- Students lead a blindfolded partner around an obstacle course touching only

classroom to teach students about stage directions.

fingertips to fingertips.

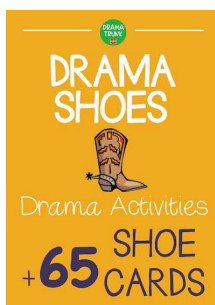
Variation for drama class:

- Students use stage directions to direct their partner through an obstacle course such as:
 - move stage right
 - move stage left
 - move upstage (right or left)
 - move downstage (right or left)

FOLLOW YOUR NOSE

FOLLOW YOUR NOSE is a great drama activity to get teen students thinking about character movement.

You may like these movement activities:



Players: This drama activity is suitable for all sized groups.

Instructions:

- Students walk around the space in a large circle (but not in single line).
- The teacher shouts different body parts that the students must lead with while they walk (nose, chin, stomach, head, knee, foot, left arm etc...)
- I find it useful to instruct students to imagine that there is a piece of string attached to the body part pulling them along and to continue to remind students about the body part that is leading. I also find it useful to provide a demonstration and to spotlight different students.

Extension:

- Encourage students to start thinking of different characters that might walk that way. You can ask students about the characters as they are walking or alternatively comment on what type of character they may be portraying.
- With a character in mind and still being led by the body part, ask students to take on the further characteristics of that character (refine).

Further extension: You can also add in Laban categories for movement (light, heavy, sustained etc...). This can be incorporated into making more refined characters.

GIANT'S, KNIGHT'S AND WIZARDS

A really fun adaptation of "rock paper scissors"

Players: This is a whole class drama game

How to play:

- In a circle, teach and practice 3 actions/sounds

GIANTS: stamp their feet with their arms in the air and say "fee fi fo fum"

KNIGHTS: draw their swords and say "en guard"

WIZARDS: throw both arms forward as if throwing a spell and say "shazaam"

- Split the class into 2 even sized groups. The groups must stand far enough away from each other to secretly decide as a group whether they will become knights, giants or wizards.

- Once they have decided (you can give them a short period to decide) the groups stand opposite each other.
- The teacher counts the groups in 1, 2, 3 and on 3 they must do the action/sound as a group.
 - Knights beat Giants
 - Giants beat Wizards
 - Wizards beat Knights
- After they have completed the whole action/sound, the losing team must run back to their line before the winning team members catch them.
- Any losing team member caught by the other team becomes part of the new team. Play until all players are on one team only.

Alternative: Students find pairs and on 3 become either a Giant, Knight or Wizard. The losing pair goes out and the remaining students find a new partner to “Giant, Knight, Wizard” with. Play until there is a winner. If any match results in a draw, students play the same person again until one of them wins.

GIBBERISH STORIES

GIBBERISH STORIES is a fun drama activity to develop pantomime skills and to think about use of vocal tone, pace etc. to tell a story. It's a fantastic voice game suitable for end of elementary (primary) years to high school.

You may like these for Gibberish Stories:



Players: This drama activity is suitable for all sized groups and is played in a circle.

Instructions:

- Students must use their voice in an interesting way to tell a story in gibberish.
- The class stands in a circle. One at a time a student enters the circle to add to the story in gibberish. There should only be one person in the middle and they should try to carry on the story from where the person before them left off if possible (this is not always possible).
- I always go first in this activity. Try to keep some narrative to the story line with characters in mind. I also like to switch between characters. For example, I will demonstrate a horror movie scene in gibberish where I switch between the victim and killer and act out a scene between the two or a western standoff where I switch between the two characters. I find that this gives students more freedom with their story choices and I can demonstrate different gibberish styles and how the use of voice (and movement) can be used to show difference in character and also the idea of the activity which is still to tell a narrative. They will not all choose to play different characters and it is not necessary.

What is gibberish?

- Gibberish is nonsense language. To tell a story in gibberish, voice tone, pace, pause, pitch and intonation is used.
- There is no one way to speak in gibberish and every person will have their own style (some may prefer just using clicking sounds or 'la la laaas' or 'blah' whereas some will use different letter combinations and sounds for a gibberish effect).

Practicing gibberish with the class:

- Start by practicing gibberish with your class and lead with an example
- It may be helpful to have students practice their 'gibberish' with a partner. Ask them to tell their partner about their favourite movie in gibberish and to focus on exaggerated voice tone, pace, pause, pitch and intonation to imitate the

rhythm of a lively and exaggerated conversation but in nonsense language. The language should be exaggerated and lively.

Gibberish story ideas:

- Try a western or horror movie or retell a classic fairy tale in gibberish. If doing a fairy tale, the class should try to keep the narrative of the story line as far as possible.

GROUP FREEZE

GROUP FREEZE is a concentration drama activity / game that focuses students on their surrounds.

Players: This is a whole class activity suitable for small to large groups.

How to play:

- Students and teacher walk around the drama space.
- As soon as the teacher stops walking, students must 'freeze'.
- See how quickly the group can freeze.
- *Alternative:* secretly chose a student to lead the stop.

HUMAN KNOT

HUMAN KNOT is a classic classroom activity (not technically a drama game) that promotes group cooperation.

Players: This is best played in groups of 6 - 8.

How to play this drama team game:

- Student's stand in a circle, close their eyes and find 2 different hands to hold in the circle.
- Students must make sure that they are holding 2 different students' hands and may need to adjust themselves when they open their eyes.
- The groups must now work together to untangle the group without letting go of any hands. They will need to work together and communicate to move the group out of the knot.

Extension: Try it as a whole class or have a competition to see what group can untangle themselves first.

IF YOU LOVE ME, HONEY, GIVE ME A SMILE

IF YOU LOVE ME HONEY, GIVE ME A SMILE is a classic drama game to get everyone laughing and practice keeping a straight drama face!

Players: This is a whole class circle drama game and can be played with medium to large groups.

How to play: Students stand in a circle. The first allocated student stands in the middle. The first student must then approach another student and say:

"Honey, if you love me, give me a smile?"

And without laughing or smiling (with an absolutely neutral expression), that person must say:

“Honey, you know I love you but I just can’t smile”

If the middle student manages to make a student smile, they switch places and the smiling student must try to get someone else to smile. If they don’t get a smile, they must try someone else.

Rules:

- Absolutely no touching – the student in the middle must use their voice, facial expression, movement, focus and gestures to try and “crack” the target student into smiling/laughing.
- The student in the middle, stays in the middle until they can make someone smile.
- If someone doesn’t smile, the student in the middle must move on to the next student. They can’t keep trying the same person.

Notes:

- I find students take this game on very quickly and will naturally try different tactics to get a smile.
- The general manner of the game (being students with their peers), makes students laugh.
- Choose a confident student to go first.

JOB INTERVIEW

JOB INTERVIEW is a really fun improv theatre game that gets students thinking about characters and introduces the technique of 'hot seating'.

You may like these:



Players: This drama activity is suitable for all sized groups.

How to play:

- One student (interviewee) leaves the room so that they cannot hear the character that they are assigned. The class (or teacher) decide on a job type that will be the focus of the interview.
- The interviewee enters the job interview and sits on a chair facing the audience.
- The audience then asks the interviewee questions to ascertain whether they are suitable for the job.
- The key is to ask appropriate questions related to what that person / job is but not to be too obvious to give it away too quickly.
- The teacher should lead the questioning and start with an example run so that the class understands good questions.

What is hot seating?

- 'Hot seating' is a way to explore and discover a character and involves asking a character questions to find out more about them such as their background, motivations and behaviours. This technique can be used for any character and is an excellent way to develop characters.
- Good 'hot seating' questions are the types of questions you might ask when getting to know someone.

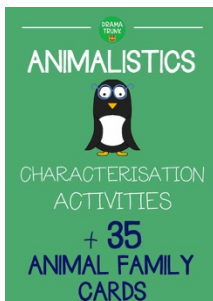
How to do it:

- It's similar to this game except the person in the chair knows who their character is and the class asks them questions about themselves which they answer in character.
- The person in the hot seat must maintain their character (movement, body language, manner, voice etc.) and answer in role.
- There are some common questions which can be discussed before starting (name, age, who do you live with, where do you live, favourite things to do, job, likes / dislikes etc. but it is also good for the teacher to demonstrate character / play context specific questions (such as things that have happened to the character) with the character and context in mind. This assists the character in the hot seat explore character motivation.

KEY FOCUS

KEY FOCUS is as the name indicates, a drama focus game. I have always liked it for spacial awareness and connectedness as well.

For more drama:



Players: This is a whole class circle drama game. It is suitable for small to large groups.

How to play this focus drama game:

- Students stand in a circle.
- Teacher places a set of keys (or something else but I find a set of keys is best) in the middle of the circle.
- One at a time, students must look at the keys, then close their eyes and try to walk with their eyes closed into the circle and place their hand on the keys.
- Encourage students to focus on the keys and “see them in their minds” before they close their eyes.

Rules:

- No counting steps / measuring distance
- No diving at the keys or doing a general foot sweep. Students must purposefully and directly walk into the circle and put their hand on the keys
- No feeling around with hands on the ground. Students must purposefully and directly bend down and place their hand on the ground where they think the keys are
- They can then open their eyes and look to see how close they are once they have put their hand down.

Note:

- Students won't likely succeed at this the first time (unless its luck) but they will get better at it as they practice and will love this activity.
- As students get better, start making the circle bigger.

LOCATION FREEZE

In LOCATION FREEZE, students use their imagination to create frozen 'tableaux' that depicts locations, accepting 'offers' made by others and exploring imagery. This can be used as an improv game as well. It's a good activity for teens or late elementary (primary) as well.

You may like these:



Players: This is an improv scene game that is played with groups of 5 or 6 students (but it can be less or more and even be the whole class).

Instructions:

- Teacher explains that a “frozen tableaux” is a frozen picture or postcard that the students will make to show the class a location or setting.
- Students are directed to get up one at a time and think of something or someone that would be in a location.
- The teacher prompts students to create a “tableaux” or “frozen picture” with around 5 or 6 students, getting input from the class about what characters / things they might find in the location.

What is a tableaux?

- A tableaux is a 'freeze frame' depicting a moment.
- Students must utilise character (body language, facial expression, manner, gesture) and space (levels, in action) to depict a moment in time.
- Freeze frames are commonly used in drama and students must make their individual freeze (action) work well with the groups 'picture'.
- Freezes should be clear and able to be maintained.
- Freezes should capture and create an appropriate atmosphere.

Example tableaux scene

- The scene is in a HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM.
- Teacher asks students to think of characters they might find in a hospital waiting room.
- Teacher encourages students to interact with each other and to complement other freezes. Encourage students to interact in the scene and work with the existing tableaux.
- Try different locations and create multiple frozen pictures! You can have as little or as many students as you like in the tableaux.

For this scene:

- **Doctor:** teacher asks one student to hop onto the stage and show a freeze like a doctor doing something in the scene. The doctor might be reading a chart or examining a patient.
- **Nurse:** teacher directs a student to take a freeze as a nurse, thinking about what the nurse might be doing. The nurse might take a freeze like they are talking to the doctor or perhaps the nurse is at the nurses desk.
- **Patient:** teacher directs a student to take a freeze as a patient. Perhaps they become the patient who is being examined by the doctor. The patient might hold their leg as if it were broken.
- **Parent:** teacher directs a student to take a freeze as the parent of the patient. Perhaps they put their arm on the shoulder of the patient or freeze like they are asking the doctor or nurse a question.
- **Paramedic:** teacher directs a student to take a freeze as a paramedic. Perhaps they are wheeling in a stretcher bed with another patient they just picked up in the ambulance.

- **Patient on Stretcher:** As the last freeze was a paramedic wheeling a patient in, encourage a student to become that patient.

Extension: Have students come up with 1 line to say as their character. Once the frozen picture is complete, prompt the students to take it in turns to say their lines.

Further extension: After saying 1 line each, direct students to create a short improvised scene starting with the frozen picture. The scene should show the interaction between characters and be based on the tableaux they have created. Give the scene a time frame (30-60 seconds) but let it run if it is going well.

LOCATION PROPS

LOCATION PROPS is a good concentration game that also gets students thinking about drama environments and helps to develop pantomime skills. It's good with teens but can work with older elementary (primary) kids!

You may like these:



Players: This is an improv scene game that is played with groups of 4 or 5 students (but it can even be the whole class).

Instructions:

- Students must enter the chosen “location” and, without saying what the object is, create / use an object that would be present in that environment / scene.
- Each subsequent student that enters the environment must use the objects that were created before them by previous players (not necessarily in order).
- This requires students to pay close attention to all previous students and attempt to recall all of the objects that have been created (and use them).
- Each student also adds their own object.
- At the end of the game, students should reflect on the location and what objects were created.
- Less confident students should go earlier in the game so as to recall less objects (to begin with).

Example location prop scene

- The environment is an OFFICE.
- The first student enters and uses a computer.
- The second student must use the computer and come up with a new object (let's say, a pen).
- The third student must use the computer, the pen and create something new.

Mime

- It's optional whether to have the scene in mime or not.
- If the scene does have sound, students should not identify the item they are creating/using by name (i.e. “I am just going to use this computer over here”), rather, they can create a scene around the item.
- For new and younger groups, try mime first.

LOOK UP, LOOK DOWN

LOOK UP LOOK DOWN is a quick and fun drama warm up game (but can also be a quick end of class game) that is played in a circle. It's one of my favourites!

Players: This is a whole class circle drama game and can be played with medium to large groups.

How to play this drama game:

- Students stand in a circle and begin by looking down. When the teacher says “look up” all students must look up and look straight at another student (it might be straight ahead or sideways and even to the person next to them.)
- There must be no looking at the ground, above heads etc. They must look straight at another student.
- If 2 students make eye contact, both students must “scream” and die. They perform a quick dramatic death, fall over and then sit in the middle of the circle or to the side until the game finishes.
- When the teacher says “look down” all students must look down again until they are told to “look up” and look at another student.
- Make the circle tighter as more students go out.

MIRROR

MIRROR is a good focus activity that also acts as a gentle physical warm up.

Players: This drama activity is done in pairs

Instructions:

- Students must face a partner and “mirror” their actions.
- Encourage the leader to do big and slow movements and switch around so that everybody has a turn leading.
- Prompt students to use their faces (do funny faces in slow motion) and to use every part of their body.

MIRROR GROUPS

MIRROR is a good focus activity that also acts as a gentle physical warm up.

This is an extension of the above mirror activity

Players: This is played in groups of 4.

Instructions:

- Similar to the last activity in that students must use the mirror technique. Except, this time they mirror in groups of 4 and add move throughout the space.
- Explain to students that there should always be a leader but that the leader changes depending on the direction that the group is facing.
- Students should arrange themselves in a diamond pattern, all facing the same way.
- The forward-facing student is the first leader and the rest of the group follows their actions (mirroring) from behind.
- When the front leader turns around, a new leader leads the group.
- Students should try to move seamlessly from one leader to another.

- For example: The front leader turns around 90 degrees to their right. The student on the right side of the diamond formation is now the leader and the group follow (mirror) that person.
- The groups can walk (they do not need to stand stationary)

Extension: Try a whole class mirror activity, where different students have a turn of leading.

OBJECTS (LIVING PICTURES)

In this drama activity, students work together to create shapes with their bodies and develop pantomime skills. This is a great drama activity for kids of all ages!

You may like these:



Players: This is a drama activity that works well in groups of 4 (but can be 3 or 5)

How to play:

- Teacher explains that students must use their bodies to create objects.
- In small groups (3-4) students work together to become different parts of objects.
- For example, teacher calls out “*roast dinner*” and one student becomes a carrot (lying out long and straight), one student becomes the plate (making a circle body shape around the carrot) one student becomes the roast potatoes (crouching) and one student becomes the meat (making a meat shape).
- Encourage students to think creatively and tell them that there are no wrong ways to create the objects as long as they are working together.
- Give students a timeframe and count down while they are creating the freezes
- Provide individual group prompting as the groups create their freezes

Example objects: Boat; Swivel Chair; Microwave; Letters

Extension: Add in sounds and repetitive movement

ONE WORD AT A TIME STORY

ONE WORD AT A TIME STORY is a funny theatre game that is also very useful for storytelling skills.

You may like these:



Players: This theatre game is suitable as a circle activity for the whole class or alternatively in groups (4 is a good number)

How to play:

- The objective of this game is for the whole class (or small groups) to tell a coherent story “one word at a time”.
- Around the circle, students add a single word to an ongoing story.
- Give students a topic or story title to begin with.
- Remind students that they can start new sentences (often, single sentences can go on for too long).

Variation: This game can also be played as “one line at a time story”. Each person must add a new sentence to the story, taking it in turns to create a coherent story.

Variation: Instead of one word or one line at a time, students tell a story until a new student is told to take it over. The new storyteller continues the story until they are switched with a new storyteller.

POPCORN

A great focus warm up for drama - students work together to popcorn numbers in sequence, using non-verbal communication.

Players: This is a whole class drama game. It is best played with medium to large groups and is played in a circle.

How to play:

- The aim of the game is to get the whole class standing.
- If the activity is taking too long, record the high score and try to beat it another time.
- Students sit silently in a circle.
- Students must randomly stand up whilst saying a consecutive number (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 so on).
- If two students stand and say a number at the same, everyone must sit down and start at number 1 again.
- The game requires the class to cooperate and use non-verbal communication to achieve their goal (no talking other than the popcorn numbers).
- The class cannot work around the circle. It must be random.

Extension: When two students speak a number at the same time, the whole class should try to clap in unison before starting again.

PRESENTS

A creative activity to practice pantomime skills and develop improvisation skills

Students think about how to represent objects

You may like another partner activity:

Players: This is a whole class drama game.

How to play:

- Before you begin, practice miming opening a present with the students showing how to mime taking the paper off and opening the flaps of a box.
- In pairs, one student hands another student an imaginary present. Their partner takes the box and opens it and pulls out something that they have always wanted. The student says (in a loud and excited voice)

"I've always wanted a"

- And interacts briefly with the object. Encourage loud voices.

Note: This activity should be done quickly. Switch the students around a few times so they have a few goes each of giving and receiving presents.



PRIMAL SCREAMS

PRIMAL SCREAMS is a good warm up to get the drama vocal cords working or wind down to release some energy.

You may like another circle activity:



Players: This is a whole class drama game. It is best played with medium to large groups and is played in a circle.

How to play this drama game:

- One at a time, a student steps into the middle of the circle and does a large action accompanied by a loud sound (as loud as possible).
- The student steps back and the rest of the circle copies the sound and action all together
- Students should be careful not to make sounds that could damage their vocal cords (it is important not to do high pitched screams - sounds are best made from the stomach).
- I like to give a demonstration of this (without hurting my voice so at a lower volume but demonstrating the type of throat sound that is damaging versus a sound made from the stomach). While I give this demonstration I explain to students how they can hurt (and lose) their voice if they don't use it properly. It also doesn't sound very good.

QUICK CHANGE ARTIST

QUICK CHANGE ARTIST is not technically a drama game but its fun and develops observation skills. It's also a fun whole class sitting activity.

Players: This is a whole class game.

How to play:

- One student becomes the "quick change artist" and stands in front of the class showing off their different angles.
- The quick change artist then leaves the room and changes something noticeable about themselves (puts their hair up, undoes their shoe laces, switches shoes etc)
- The quick change artist then comes back inside and stands at the front while the audience tries to guess the change.
- The first student to guess the change becomes the next quick change artist.

Alternative: Do this in pairs.

SPLAT

This drama game is also a brilliant name game (I like playing this game at the start of term to learn student names and it also encourages students to learn each other's names). It's a class favourite, fantastic for a drama class warm up or end of class activity and because it's a great name game - it's a fantastic first day of school activity as well (but as a class favourite, I play it all year round!

Players: This is a whole class circle drama game. It is suitable for medium to large groups.

How to play:

- Students stand in a circle and make sure they know the names of the two students either side of them. Teacher explains that as people go out, the students who are standing next to them will change and they must always make sure they know the name of the students on either side of them. This encourages students to learn names throughout the game and assists the teacher who can call names off the roll.
- Students get their pretend 'pies' ready, holding both hands together in front of them (only one pie allowed).
- As the teacher starts calling out student names, the student whose name is called out must "duck" out of the way and the two students on either side must turn and throw a pie at each other saying "SPLAT".
- If the student in the middle (who's name was called out) does not duck out of the way in time – they are out. Otherwise, the last student to throw and say "SPLAT" is out. Whoever gets shot must perform a dramatic death and is out.
- Keep playing until there are only 2 students left.

Addition: Make the students do a 360 degree circle before throwing and saying "SPLAT".

Western Standoff: Use the following quick activity to get a winner whenever there are 2 students left in a game.

- Two students stand with their backs to each other.
- Tell the students the "magic number between 1 and 10".
- As the teacher calls out random numbers (in random order) the students take a step away from each other.
- When the "magic number" is called, the first student to turn around and shoot while saying bang is the winner.
- The loser must perform a dramatic death.

STRING OBJECTS

Not technically a drama game but a good team game where students work together to create shapes.

It encourages group communication

Players: This activity is played as a whole class or in small groups.

How to play this drama improv game:

- You will need a long piece of string for this activity.
- Students take hold of the string with both hands and hold it at around waist level. Explain to students that they must work as a group to create the shapes you call out with the string (i.e. circle, square, triangle).
- You can also split the class into groups and see who creates the shape first.
- Ask students to try and make shapes without any sound or with their eyes closed

SUPERHEROES TO THE RESCUE

SUPERHEROES TO THE RESCUE is a silly drama improv game, great for teens but can be played with advanced elementary!

You may like these:



Players: This is an improv game that works well in groups of 4 to 5.

How to play:

- In groups of 4-5, one student starts onstage and is given a “silly superhero” character to play (“Lipstick Man” “Captain Coco Pops” etc.).
- Have the class come up with a made up crisis (“All the chocolate in the world has disappeared” “a meteor is heading towards earth”). The crisis can be big or small (“you can’t find your shoes”).
- The superhero onstage starts the scene explaining the crisis (they might start by watching the television and seeing the crisis in a news report).
- At some stage the superhero comes up with a new silly superhero and says:

“If only[superhero] was here to help me”

- The new superhero answers the call, enters and introduces themselves and their special powers.
- The two characters proceed with the scene, discussing how they are going to solve the crisis.
- The second superhero then introduces a third superhero the same way:

“If only[superhero] was here to help us”

- And so forth until all the students are in the scene.
- Once all of the superheroes are in the scene, they attempt to solve the crisis and bring the scene to an end.

Alternative: If students are having difficulty coming up with new superheroes, allocate each student a superhero before they start.

THIS IS MY FRIEND

THIS IS MY FRIEND is a great “get to know you” activity.

Students practice talking to each other and presenting information to the whole class

Players: This activity is done in pairs.

How to play:

- Teacher splits class into pairs and tells the class that they only have “1 minute” to do this activity (this will prompt students to think quickly and because it is short, the quieter students will feel more confident as they know they don’t have to talk for a long time).
- In just 1 minute, one partner must tell the other as many things about themselves as possible. The teacher may prompt this before students begin with some examples of things that they may talk about. Teacher tells students that once they are finished talking for 1 minute, their partner is going to introduce them to the class and tell the class a few things about them.

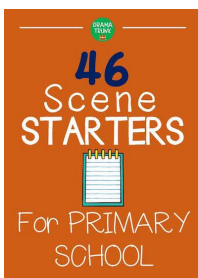
Example prompt questions:

- *What is your favourite food?*
- *Do you have any pets?*
- *Do you have any siblings?*
- *What do you love to do (hobbies)?*
- *What was your last teacher's name?*
- *What did you do on your last birthday?*
- *Name some things that you love.*

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING is a staple drama (or theatre) improv game. It is a perfect game to play with beginners to improv as it prompts kids to quickly devise simple scene ideas in a whole group setting. But it's not only great for beginners - once students are familiar with the game, it can be played quickly and is a great energy lifter and warm up. So, it's suitable for all improv skill levels and suitable for middle elementary / primary (years 3 or 4) up to the end of high school.

You may like:



Players: This is a whole class circle drama game and can be played with small or large groups.

How to play:

- One student starts in the middle of the circle and is given "something" to do (e.g. getting ready for a big night out").
- The next student enters and asks the student: "What are you doing?"
- The first student responds with a different activity (different to what they have been doing) and leaves the circle.
- The second student immediately starts acting out the new activity until the next student enters and asks: "what are you doing?" They must then come up with a new activity.
- Encourage actions and words in the short improvised activities.
- *Example:* The first student is brushing their hair and the next student comes in and asks "what are you doing?" and the first student says something like 'riding in a bike race' then leaves. The next student immediately starts acting out a bike race scenario.
- Keep playing around the circle.

Elimination in what are you doing? Once students get the hang of the game, start playing more quickly and eliminate students who say "ummmm" or repeat an activity that has already been said.

Hints for playing what are you doing: Encourage students to start with simple ideas when they say what they are doing (such as brushing hair, riding a horse, getting dressed, putting on shoes, eating breakfast etc.) as it will get harder as the game goes along and ideas are eliminated.

Beginners: For beginners to the game, it may be necessary for the teacher to have some ideas to give the students quickly. The game works best when it flows at a nice pace around the circle, so I don't like to let students ponder for too long. You will find that if you help them the first time, by the second or third time around the circle they will be ready with their own ideas. The pace of the game is importance. I don't start eliminating students until they are very familiar with the game and it runs at a smooth and quick pace for the whole class.

WHO SAID THAT?

A good “get to know you” activity that promotes communication

Players: This is a whole class activity.

How to play:

- On a blank card, each student secretly writes something about themselves that no one else knows. The teacher collects and shuffles the cards and hands them back to students. Make sure that students haven't been handed back their own card by mistake.
- Students must now try to find the author of the card.
- Some students may need prompting about what to write. In that case, you can suggest things like: favourite food? Favourite movie? Favourite pastime? Favourite singer etc...
- Prompt students to talk about how they found the author of the card and prompt the students to talk about themselves and the card they wrote.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT is a great theatre game for 'accepting' and also gets the audience suggesting story ideas. It is better played with groups with some improv experience but is suitable for near beginner level and encourages idea suggestions.

Players: This is a scene creation drama activity that starts with 1 player but more players can join the scene as it goes along.

Instructions:

- 1 student starts onstage and is given a scenario or task that they start acting out.
- Teacher calls FREEZE and asks the audience “What happens next?”.
- The audience tell the next part of the story and the student onstage unfreezes and continues with the scene, now adding in the additional part to the story.
- Add more students into the scene as you go along.
- Ask the audience to incorporate more characters into the story and pick students to fill the new roles.
- The aim is to tell a coherent story and for the performers to accept the story offers and act it out. The game also encourages students to offer story ideas / scenarios.

YES, LETS!

YES, LETS! is a classic drama game teaching students to accept 'offers'. Students practice improvisation and responding, using movement, gesture and voice. It's suitable for

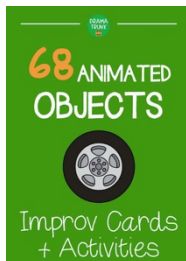
Players: This is a whole class circle drama game. It is suitable for medium to large groups and it can also be played scattered around the drama space (I prefer it the latter way).

How to play this drama game:

- Teacher explains that in this game, the most important thing is that you accept “offers” made by everyone to do an activity and puts lots of energy into acting out the activity, using voice and actions.
- The teacher prompts students to find their own space in the room (or in a circle) and practices some actions.

primary school (elementary) to High School groups and is a great warm up.

For more improv:



- When the teacher says “Let’s ...activity....” the class must all say “Yes, Lets!” loudly and then start acting out that activity.

Example:

- The teacher calls out “Let’s dig a hole” and the class says “Yes, Lets!” and start acting out digging a hole.
- The teacher should join in with the actions and saying “yes, lets”.
- Students can add dialogue and sounds but don’t push this until they are more comfortable.

Lets:

- Drive a car / Ride a horse / Skip around the class / Brush our hair / Catch a butterfly / Tell a naughty child off
- The teacher should encourage a very loud and enthusiastic “Yes, Lets!” which will impact the energy the students put into acting out the activities.
- Students may also be prompted to loudly suggest their own “Lets...” activity that the rest of the class will then follow.

ZAP

ZAP is a classic drama game good for focus. It's a quick warm up or wind down activity if you find yourself with some spare time at the end of a lesson.

Players: This is a whole class circle drama game. It is suitable for medium to large groups.

How to play:

- In a circle, students learn the following actions and sounds.
- **WHOOSH:** Introduce the first sound / action “WHOOSH”. One person passes the “whoosh” to their neighbour by waving both hands at them and saying “whoosh”. Practice passing the “whoosh” around in one direction.
- **WHOA:** Introduce the second sound/action “WHOA”. Holding arms out in a ‘stop’ manner and saying “WHOA” changes the direction of the whoosh. The “whoosh” then continues in the other direction until another person says “whoa”.
- **ZAP:** To pass the “whoosh” across the circle (instead of to a neighbour), say “ZAP” while pointing and making a clapping action towards someone.
- The receiver of the “zap” now has the “whoosh” and can either “whoosh” it to a neighbour, “zap” it to another person across the circle or they can “whoa” and send the “whoosh” back to the person who sent it saying “zap”.

You can add in additional actions / sounds and may prefer to use “ZIP ZAP BOING” and clapping actions for all three.

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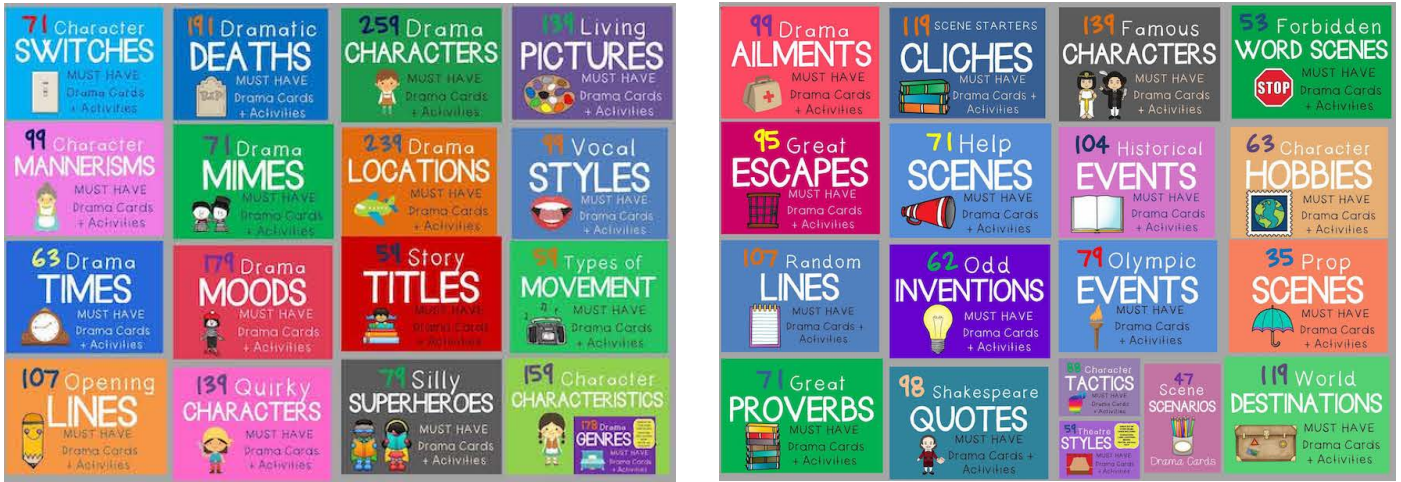
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