

Module 9



Problem Solving through Theatre: Learning 21st Century Skills via the Dramatic Arts Grades 6-12



*Developed by San Diego County Office of
Education, Old Globe Theatre, and La Jolla
Playhouse*



UNIT 2: COLLABORATION

“Collaboration is not about gluing together existing egos. It’s about the ideas that never existed until after everyone entered the room.”

– Unknown

Lesson Objective: to explore the skills specific to building an ensemble through collaboration.

Key Terms: Ensemble, Leadership, Teamwork, Cooperation, Trust, Listening

Materials Needed: Sheets of newspaper (same number as participants).

National Core Arts Standards:

TH:Pr5.1.7

a. Participate in a variety of acting exercises and techniques that can be applied in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

TH:Re9.1.1

a. Build on others’ ideas in a guided drama experience (e.g., process drama, story drama, creative drama).

TH:Cn10.1.7

a. Incorporate multiple perspectives and diverse community ideas in a drama/theatre work.

California VAPA Standards:

7.5.1 Demonstrate projection, vocal variety, diction, gesture, and confidence in an oral presentation.

HS.4.2 Report on how a specific actor used drama to convey meaning in his or her performances.

Common Core State Standards:

RST1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

English Language Development Standards:

Collaborative

1. Exchanging information and ideas with others through oral collaborative discussions on a range of social and academic topics.

Interpretive

5. Listening actively to spoken English in a range of social and academic context.

Note to Facilitator: These activities can be used all at once or over the course of a few sessions depending on the group. Pick and choose which activities you feel most comfortable leading under each of the lesson components.

Theatre Warm-Ups

Vocal and Physical *See attachment*

Introductory Activities

SHARK ATTACK

Objective(s): To get all members of the group safely out of the “water.”

Skill Set Used: Teamwork, Creativity, Ensemble Building

Materials Needed: Sheets of newspaper (same number as participants).

Instructions:

1. The sheets of newspaper are scattered around the floor. Players begin by walking around the space.
2. The facilitator calls, “Shark!” and all players have to “swim” to a piece of paper.
3. After each time “Shark!” is called, one or more pieces of newspaper are taken away until only one piece is left.
 - Encourage the group to help get everybody safely out of the water. More than one person can and will be on one a piece of paper – the challenge is getting as many people as possible on one.

PUSH/PULL

Objective(s): To maintain balance with your partner.

Skill Set Used: Focus, Physical Awareness, Give and Take, Cooperation

Materials Needed: None

Instructions:

1. Students pair up (the closer the heights or the partners, the better this exercise works).

2. With their partners, students begin by facing each other and putting their hands on the other's shoulders and pushing. The goal is not to overpower the other person, but to work together to find a steady balance.
3. With the same goal in mind, students take each other by the wrists, lean back, plant their feet, and take each other's weight.
4. Without talking, challenge students to continue to pull while sitting down and standing back up simultaneously. This can also be a challenge while they are pushing against each other back-to-back.

Bridge Activity

COLUMBIAN HYPNOSIS

Objective(s): To move fluidly as a pair.

Skill Set Used: Focus, Physical Awareness, Yes, and...

Materials Needed: None

Instructions:

1. Students pair up and choose who is partner A and B.
2. A holds their hand in front of B's face. B is hypnotized by the hand and must keep his face within six inches of it at all times (any closer and they will get dizzy). A slowly begins to move their hand around with B following.
3. This can also be done in groups. The trick is to move slowly and encourage pairs to explore levels and space.

BLIND CARS

Objective(s): To guide the blind cars around the room without crashing

Skill Set Used: Trust, Focus, Ensemble

Materials Needed: None

Instructions:

1. Students pair up. One is the DRIVER and one is the CAR.
2. The DRIVER stands behind the CAR, who closes their eyes. The DRIVER guides the CAR by tapping them with the following directions:
Head – go forward

- Right shoulder – turn right
Left shoulder – turn left
Middle of the back – reverse
No tapping – stop!
3. The CAR is always responsible for the speed! After a few minutes, switch roles.
- To make it more difficult, increase the cars into a bus of 4. Same instructions, but the directions must pass from the DRIVER through each part of the bus to the front.

Main Activity(ies):

HUMAN KNOT

Objective(s): To untangle the knot.

Skill Set Used: Ensemble, Concentration, Patience, Cooperation

Materials Needed: None

Instructions:

1. Arrange groups of 5 or more people.
2. Players stand in a circle and grab hands of two different people in the circle. Make sure to avoid grabbing hands of players directly to your right or left. After this, everyone's hands should be tangled.
3. Players must try to untangle the knot without letting go of their hands. To make it more difficult, the players can refrain from talking.
4. The knot will be untangled when players are standing in a circle still holding hands.
 - To make this more difficult, make the exercise silent or have students work with their eyes closed.

MACHINE GAME

Objective(s): To create a functional machine as a group

Skill Set Used: Ensemble Building, Bold Choices, Cooperation, Yes, and...

Materials Needed: None

Instructions:

1. All players begin by standing in a circle.
2. One person begins by going to the middle of the circle immediately starting a movement and sound that they can keep repeating for the duration of the game.
3. One by one, players enter as they choose with a completely different movement and sound.
 - The idea is to add onto someone else's movement in the circle so that it is one functioning machine.

ABC COUNT

Objective(s): To recite the alphabet (or count to a certain number), one letter at a time, without speaking at the same time

Skill Set Used: Focus, Instinct, Listening, Quiet Energy, Patience, Ensemble Building

Materials Needed: None

Instructions:

1. All students sit in a circle facing outward with eyes closed.
2. Together, the group must recite the alphabet, one letter at a time, without speaking or making noise at the same time. If this happens, the group must start over again from the beginning.

Note: the alphabet can be swapped with numbers (i.e. counting to 10 or 20).

Discussion/Reflection:

Use the last few minutes of the session to discuss how each of these activities relates to COLLABORATION. How do the experiences connect to situations or problems that we encounter today? This can be in school, at home, with friends, in the workplace or on a team. Discussion and reflection opportunities allow students to connect what they experienced to what they know and help them to make larger connections.