



TEACHER'S STUDY GUIDE—LINKED TO IRP'S

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Instant Improv

Vancouver TheatreSports® League (VTSL) began in 1980 and is now a local institution and a worldwide phenomenon, producing and staging some of the most daring and innovative improv in the world.

The audience provides the inspiration in the form of suggestions, and the

improvisers provide the entertainment in the form of hilarious improvised scenes. Instant Improv allows the audience to see their ideas instantly transformed into reality. Whether reconstructing the story of an audience member's first day at school or a recess mishap, each Instant Improv performance is as unique as its audience. For



VTSL INCORPORATES SOME OF THE FOLLOWING GAMES IN *INSTANT*

Interviewing the Expert The audience provides the name of a sport and a vegetable. In a talk show setting, one actor is the interviewer and the other is an expert on, for example, tennis played with carrots; or how to use potatoes in rock climbing.

Emotional Roller Coaster The actors choose who the characters are and what they are doing. The audience supplies three emotions such as suspicion, fear, and joy. The facilitator calls out the first emotion and the scene starts in this mood. When the next emotion is called out the actors must find a good reason to shift into the new mood.

Open Scene The audience provides two actors with a problem. The actors choose the location and an activity, then start improvising. The third person enters the scene to complicate or resolve the situation.

Scene Beyond Words The audience supplies a location. The actors choose who they are and what the problem is, then improvise, playing their emotions in full, but without using words.

Complaints Department The audience provides the name or type of a store. One actor is the supervisor in the Complaints Department. All the others choose their characters and their problems and come to speak to the person in charge.

Fairytales The audience provides the title of a well-known fairy tale and the actors enact it as an improvisation. Each actor can play several roles, and for optional chaotic good times, once the scene is complete, they may repeat it in a two-minute version, then one-minute, then thirty seconds, and finally, ten seconds .



THEMES:

- COMEDY
- CREATIVITY
- EMPOWERMENT
- IMAGINATION
- IMPROVISATION
- INTERACTION
- LISTENING SKILLS
- NARRATIVE
- SPONTANEITY
- STORY TELLING
- TEAMWORK



ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

CREAT YOUR OWN STORY This game is very simple and can be played with students as young as kindergarten, but older students and even adults can benefit by its sheer simplicity. It can be done with two people, a small group, or even an entire classroom. Participants can do this exercise either verbally or by writing out their contributions to the story. Just fill in the blanks.

Once upon a time, there was a _____

And every day _____

Until one day _____

And because of that, _____

And because of that, _____

And because of that, _____

And in the end, _____

(Add as many 'And because of that' lines as needed.)

WARM-UP EXERCISES

Firing Line (Groups of 4) — One actor faces a line of three others. In turn, they fire words at the single person who has to reply with the first word that comes to mind (free association). The three do not associate but think of words as different as possible.

Circle Stories (Groups of 4—6) — Create a title for the story. One actor starts with one word, the next actor adds another word, and so on as the story is built round the circle making grammatical sense while producing a story that is logical on its own terms. Don't judge — just listen and go with the flow. Pairs and small groups can practice this exercise until they think almost as one and the stories become vivid and fun. This exercise can be done with single words, short phrases, or complete sentences.

Orchestrated Stories (Groups of 4—6) One actor is chosen as the conductor of the orchestra. As the conductor points to different players, that player tells part of the story for as long as the conductor wishes to let them continue. It could be for a full minute, or it

BASIC IMPROVS

Solo Activity (1 actor) — Choose a common daily activity like making a sandwich or washing the dishes. Use props if available. While performing this activity tell a story describing an event or incident from your past.

Job Interview (2 actors) — Two actors are required. One in the interviewer, the other is the applicant. Only at the start of the scene should the actors be informed as to what the job is that the applicant is being interviewed for. The more creative the job, the better. For example, Time Machine Operator, Food Taster for the Queen, etc.

Beginnings (2 or 3 actors) — One or two of the actors perform wild, arbitrary movements and, on a signal such as a whistle, the actors freeze while the remaining actor(s) must explain what it is they are doing by observing the body positions.

