



# Drama Activities for the Secondary School Classroom

## **ALPHABET IMPROV**

Students walk around a given space. Shout out a letter of the alphabet, and have students dramatise a word beginning with that letter, e.g. F: *flamingo, fireman, freezing*. If two or more students dramatise the same thing, they are eliminated as are students who can't think of an appropriate word. After each round, ask a few students to say the word they've dramatised and/or have other students guess.

## **DRAMATIC LINE**

Have students stand in a line standing shoulder to shoulder. One end of the line is 'least dramatic' while the other end of the line is 'most dramatic'. Call out a phrase and ask the first person standing at the least dramatic side to repeat it. The rest of the group must repeat the phrase, one-by-one, becoming more dramatic every time until the phrase reaches its peak at the most dramatic person. Then mix students along the line and repeat. Example phrases include:

*We've won the game!/Those boys are handsome!/You're driving me crazy!/Shut up and get out!/ Would you like some tea?/Where am I?/Get away from me, creep!/How do I look?/He's sort of... special./I've got a surprise for you!*

*Variation:* For larger groups, have students stand in two facing lines; students across from each other are partners. Give each student one half of a two-line dialogue, which students then repeat pair by pair along the line, increasing/decreasing their dramatic reading.

## **EULOGY**

This activity helps students develop fluency, use past tenses, and share anecdotes. Start off with an example, having two students come to the front of the class. One takes on the role of the deceased; the other takes on the role of a friend or family member giving an eulogy about him/her, sharing positive memories about their relationship and the deceased's accomplishments (the speaker can make up details). Then have students pair up and take turns swapping roles. *Variation:* The deceased is a famous person whom the student admires.

## **PAST CONTINUOUS TABLEAU**

Use this activity to practice/review the past continuous. Give students a situation, have them act it out, then interrupt it and ask them what they were doing when the interruption happened.

Example situations:

- You're in class waiting for the teacher. [Students act out the situation.] The teacher



walks in. What were you doing when the teacher walked in?

- You're in a restaurant. [Students act out the situation.] A fire starts. What were you doing when the fire started?
- You're in a supermarket. [Students act out the situation.] An armed robber enters the supermarket. What were you doing when the robbery started?
- You're hanging out with your friends. [Students act out the situation.] An earthquake starts. What were you doing when the earthquake started?

the thing/action. This continues for a few seconds until someone else shouts out a different thing to be/do.

### **YES, NO, PLEASE, BANANA**

Put students into pairs and write up four words on the board: *Yes, No, Please, Banana*. Give pairs 5 minutes to come up with a short scene that includes these four words (in any order). Encourage expressive body language. *Variation 1:* Students can use only these four words. *Variation 2:* Students can use these words in addition to other words. The four words can also be substituted with others if you do the activity more than once.

### **SLIDESHOW**

One student is a narrator who describes a vacation he/she took. Four-five other students are the 'pictures' the narrator is describing. The narrator will describe a scene and then count down from three. The other students must quickly create a tableau showing the picture the narrator just described. Each narrator can narrate three-four scenes this way. For example: *Last summer, I went to the beach. Here I am eating ice cream with my family. (3, 2, 1, freeze.) Next, we swam in the ocean and played with a ball. (3, 2, 1, freeze). Then we relaxed on our beach chairs. (3, 2, 1, freeze).*

### **YES, LET'S**

Have students walk around an open space. One student shouts out something to be/do, e.g. "Let's be crocodiles!" The other students must accept the suggestion, saying, "Yes, let's!" and acting out