

INSTRUCTION

1. Access (5-7 minutes)

Access students' prior knowledge in building engagement through establishing immediate relevancy; a "hook" that is a short introduction to the lesson.

- **Entry Procedure (or use your own):** Personal materials on shelf, grab Drama binder/ journal, take a seat in the circle, open journal, and work on writing an answer to the prompt: *What do you know about the word "improv" or "improvisation?" If your parent says, "We're going to improvise for dinner tonight!" what do you think they mean? Do all actors always use a script when they make a performance? Explain why or why not.*
 - Teacher circulates, passing out Weekly Ensemble Rubrics, and uses this time to quickly take attendance.
- **Opening Warm-Up Game: I Am a __!**
 - Have students stand in a circle.
 - Call out a location (e.g. park). One by one, students step forward into the circle while declaring what they will be in that location (e.g. "I am a tree!" "I am a bench!") and then becoming that thing with their bodies.
- Students step back to their places in the circle.
- Have each student share what they liked or what was challenging about that activity.

2. New Information (10-15 minutes)

Acquire new information – declarative and/or procedural.

- **Define "Improvisation":** *Actions or words that are done without pre-planning; making it up as you go.*
 - **Connect to Warm-Up:** You just participated in an improvisation activity in our warm-up. You didn't get time to plan ahead what you would be in the circle. You just made it up as you went.
 - **Connect to Enduring Understanding:** Improv is a skill that can help you in all areas of life. It helps you learn to react and respond to unexpected situations, it builds your confidence in your own ideas, it improves your ability to work as a team and build on peer ideas.
- **Tell students:**
 - In drama, improv is about creating stories from scratch, together. This requires that you accept and build on each other's ideas. Our ideas, or what we add to an exercise, game, or scene, are called **offers**.
 - In our warm-up, every time someone said "I'm a __!" they were making an offer.
 - Nothing stops an improv exercise faster than if someone shuts down someone else's ideas or offers by laughing, rolling their eyes, calling an idea dumb/stupid, or ignoring or plowing over someone's offer. We talk about this in our SAY YES Rubric, saying yes to the ideas or offers of others. This is especially important in improvisation.

- Accepting and then building on your peers' ideas or offers is what keeps a story moving forward. You practiced building on your peers' ideas in the warm-up. You listened to your peers' offers and came up with another offer that went with their idea to help show the setting. Some of you literally used your bodies to expand on each other's ideas by connecting physically with one another to build something bigger or more detailed.
- Pass out hard copies of the first row (ACCEPTING AND BUILDING ON OFFERS) of the Improvisation Rubric and go over it.
- Tell students:
 - We will continue practicing these skills in some short improv exercises. Each day, we'll introduce another part of the Improvisation Rubric and give you opportunities to practice and give each other feedback.

3. Apply (20-30 minutes)

Apply a thinking skill or use knowledge in a new situation. Opportunity for feedback is provided.

Activity 1: Word Ball

- **Purpose:** To practice "passing" offers to each other and building on each other's ideas.
- **How To:** Now we will start practicing not only accepting a partner's offer, but building on it as well! Improv stories are built by listening and adding on to what our partner says or does – in a logical way.
 - Have students get into groups of three.
 - Choose any word to begin with (e.g. cat) and hold your hands as if you were holding the word in your hands. Then "throw" the word, using both your voice and your hands, to a member of the group.
 - The group member you threw it to must "catch" the word. And then they throw the first word that comes to their mind (e.g. cuddly) to the next member of the group.
 - The next group member "catches" this word. And then they throw the first associated word that pops into their head (e.g. teddy bear) to the next person.
 - The exercise continues like this until everybody has had plenty of chances to throw words around. Try to dissuade students from hesitating and encourage them to simply go with the first thing that comes to mind – remind them that there is no such thing as wrong or right when it comes to improv.
- **Feedback:** Have partners give written/verbal feedback for one member of their group (so everyone gets feedback) using the provided prompt and the Improvisation Rubric. A Feedback Form is included if you want to do this as a written exercise. Students will then add their grade to their partner's hard copy of the Improvisation Rubric by adding a letter for whatever day of the week it is underneath the row for ACCEPTING AND BUILDING ON OFFERS.
- **Prompt:** *I would give (student name) a (score on Rubric) for improvisation. This is because (use words from the ACCEPTING AND BUILDING OFFERS row of the Rubric +*

specific actions of peer to defend your answer). One suggestion I have for improvement is (clear, specific way to improve). _

Activity 2: Gift Giving

- **Purpose:** To practice accepting a peer's verbal and physical offer and immediately building on it with more detail.
- **How To:**
 - Divide the class into pairs.
 - Player A pantomimes the size and weight of a box that they then hand to Player B, saying, "Here you go!"
 - Player B mimics the pantomimed size/weight when taking the box from Player A and pantomimes opening it. Player B then says, "Thanks for the ___!" They should fill in the blank with the name of an object that could be the size and weight suggested by Player A.
 - Player A then builds on Player B's idea by giving a reason why Player A bought Player B that gift. "Yeah, I got you a ___ because ___!"
 - E.g. Player A pantomimes a small, light box. Player B opens it and says "Thanks for the pencil set!" Player A replies, "Yeah, I got you pencils because I know you are always losing them in class!"
 - Switch roles and repeat as many times as possible.
- **Feedback:** Have partners give written/verbal feedback for one member of their group (so everyone gets feedback) using the same prompt as the previous activity. A Feedback Form is included if you want to do this as a written exercise. They will then add their grade to their partner's hard copy of the Improvisation Rubric by adding a letter for whatever day of the week it is underneath the row for ACCEPTING AND BUILDING ON OFFERS.
- **Closing Journal Prompt:** *Use the word "offer" to describe what you learned today about improvisation. Why is having a strong class ensemble important for good improvisation? How can improvisation help you beyond just this class?*
 - Review journal expectations and have students check that their entry is at the "Meets" or "Exceeds" level.
- Have students self-assess their participation (SAY YES, BE SAFE) on the Weekly Ensemble Rubric. Students put a letter corresponding with the day of the week (e.g. M for Monday) in the box under their chosen grade column.
- **Exit Procedure:** Circling or stacking chairs, returning Drama binders to their correct locations neatly, turning in Weekly Ensemble Rubric and Improv rubric.

4. Generalize (5 minutes)

Generalize what has been taught. How will the teacher know if students met the measurable objective?

- Students will add their own offers and accept and build on peer offers in improvised exercises.