Lessons from “Whose Line Is It Anyway”: Using Improv Games in Teaching
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Dialogue-based games
The following games are based on limiting the dialogue of one or more performers:

1. Alphabet: Two performers enact a given scene in which each sentence must begin with the subsequent letter of the alphabet, beginning with an audience-suggested letter. The performers must go through the entire alphabet once. An early variant of the game where a 60 second time limit is added.

2. One Word Story: Each performer adds only one word to the growing story, after an initial prompt.

3. Backwards Movie Overdubbing: Any number of performers make up the dialogue of movie (without sound) being played backwards.

4. Backwards Scene: Two or three performers act out a given scene starting with the ending line and working their way line by line back to the beginning.

5. Change Letter: Two or three performers act out a given scene, and must substitute every occurrence of a given letter in their dialogue with another given letter (e.g. every "B" must be changed to "F").

6. Every Other Line: One performer acts freely while another is given a book or play. That performer responds to the first by reading every other line of the work. The performer who is not reading must end the scene with an audience-suggested line.

7. Expert Translation: One performer is an expert on a given topic, but can only speak a given foreign language. Another performer translates into English. Similar to "Foreign Film Dub".

8. Foreign Film Dub: Two performers enact a scene in a foreign language (usually using accented gibberish) chosen by the audience, while the other two performers "translate" into English after each line. This often results in the translators putting the acting performers in compromising situations by translating their gibberish in embarrassing ways.

9. Forward Reverse: Two performers start a scene, and two more later enter. Periodically the host will instruct the performers to go reverse, in which case they must reenact the performed scene backwards, and forward, in which case all reversed actions must be repeated in the proper order as originally.
10. If You Know What I Mean: Three performers improvise a scene in which they make up as many innuendos related to the given topic as they can, ending each with the phrase "if you know what I mean."

11. Number of Words: The four performers act out a given scene. Each is also assigned a number, which is the exact number of words each must use at a time.

12. Questions Only: Two performers enact a given scene speaking only in questions, while the other performers wait off-stage, one behind each of them. If either performer speaks in a non-question, or takes too long to respond, the host sounds the buzzer and they are replaced by the performer behind them.

13. Quick Change: Two or three performers enact a given scene. Another performer stands offstage and says "change" at various times during the scene; the performer who had the last line must then provide an alternate line. The changed line is commonly itself "changed", leading to both confusion, or a punchline under the comedic rule of three.

14. Song Titles: Three or four performers act out a given scene speaking only in existing song titles. Two performers begin the scene while the others wait off-stage, one behind each of them. If either performer speaks in a non-song-title, speaks a song lyric, or takes too long to respond, the host sounds the buzzer and they are replaced by the performer behind them. Similar to "Questions Only".

15. Two Line Vocabulary: Three performers enact a given scene. Two of the performers are limited to using only two specific given lines each.

16. What Are You Trying to Say?: Two performers act out a scene in which they are easily offended, taking offense to anything the other performer says.

17. Whose Line?: Two performers act out a given scene. They are each given several slips of paper with amusing lines written on them suggested in advance by the audience. Periodically, the performers pull a slip of paper out of their pocket and must include the line in the scene.

Rapid-fire games
The following games involve creating many different brief scenes in succession:

18. Props: The performers are split into pairs, each given a different unusual prop. The pairs alternate at the prompting of the host's buzzer, giving short scenes using their prop in a unique way.

19. Scenes From a Hat: The audience submits written suggestions which are placed in a hat. The host then draws from the hat, and any of the four performers, who stand off-stage, may enter and develop that scene.
20. Tag: Two performers begin in audience-suggested positions and must begin a short scene based on that position (though they can then move freely). At any point they choose, one of the other two performers calls "freeze", at which point they tag one of the two on-stage performers and take their physical position, and begin a new scene. Performers continue to replace each other and perform short scenes.

21. World's Worst: A topic is given in the form of "the world's worst [something]." The four performers come to "The World's Worst Step" (the lowest step behind the stage) and step forward one-at-a-time with examples that fit the topic. Topics could include characters (e.g. the world's worst doctor), but also other topics (e.g. the worst game show). One topic is chosen per playing, and the performers can step forward in any order, and as often as they want.

**Guessing games**
The following games involve one performer needing to guess some element(s) of the scene:

22. Interrogation: Two performers are police officers interrogating a third, who plays a suspect in a given crime. The suspect, however, does not know what the crime is and must deduce it from the clues given by the other performers. Similar to "Newsflash" and "Press Conference".

23. Let's Make a Date: One performer (usually the fourth performer in the American version) is the contestant on a dating-type show. The other three performers are the possible dates who are given odd personalities or characters via envelopes. Following one or two rounds of questioning, contestant must guess who the others are. Similar to "Party Quirks".

24. Party Quirks: One performer hosts a party which the other three arrive at. The three guests are assigned odd personalities or characters via envelopes. Whenever he is able, the host must identify what each guest is portraying. The guests enter one-at-a-time at the prompting of a doorbell sounded by the host. When their quirk is guessed correctly, a performer returns to their seat. Similar to "Let's Make A Date".

25. Press Conference: One performer is giving a press conference while the other three ask questions as reporters. The subject of the conference is either a known figure giving some sort of announcement (e.g. Santa retiring) or some sort of unusual achievement (e.g. the first female Pope). The subject is not informed of their identity, and must deduce it from the questions that the reporters ask.

**Genre/structure games**
The following games have a defined genre, event or scene structure:
26. Addicts Anonymous: One performer hosts an Alcoholics Anonymous-type meeting for the other three, who are addicted to a provided unusual item or activity.

27. Award Show: Two performers host an award show for a given absurd achievement; the other two are the winners and make an acceptance speech. Various audience members are shown as other nominees.

28. Courtroom Scene: One performer is a judge, and another is the prosecutor. The other two are given a selection of hats to choose from and act as witnesses in the given case.

29. Daytime Talk Show: One performer is the host of a daytime talk show (usually a parody of The Jerry Springer Show and other similar shows). Two other performers are guests appearing on the show, and the fourth portrays one or more members of the audience. The topic of the talk show is usually a given fairy tale, nursery rhyme, or Biblical story.

30. Director / Hollywood Director: Two performers are in a given scene. A third performer is the director, who interrupts the scene and has the performers re-enact the same scene in a different style or performance suggestion.

31. Fashion Models: Three performers act out a fashion show, the subject of which is usually an audience-suggested profession. The fourth performer comments on the show.

32. Funeral: Three or four performers act out a scene at a funeral for a person with an audience-provided name and occupation, who died in a job-related freak accident. One performer usually takes the role of the funeral director, with the remaining performers being associated with the deceased in some way. Similar games include "All In One Voice", "Reunion" and "Wedding".

33. Home Shopping: Two performers are presenters on a home shopping channel. They are given two useless items to sell, as well as a third audience-suggested item. Similar to "Infomercial".

34. Infomercial: Two performers are presenters in an infomercial selling "miracle" solutions for a given personal problem. The performers are given a box of unusual props which they must use as products they are selling, or in demonstrations. Similar games include "Greatest Hits" and "Home Shopping".

35. Millionaire Show: The four performers enact a Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?-style game show, with a given theme (e.g. gangsters, hillbillies, Germans). The performers take the roles of the host, a contestant, a "phone-a-friend" lifeline, and an audience member lifeline (not part of the actual Millionaire format).
36. **Mission Impossible/Improbable Mission**: Two performers are Mission: Impossible-style secret agents. A third performer is the voice on tape who gives them their assignment. The assignment is a mundane task (washing a car, getting dressed, etc.) which is carried out in an exaggeratedly intense, dangerous, and difficult manner. After the mission is defined by the voice on tape, suspenseful background music is played.

37. **Narrate/Film Noir**: Two performers enact a scene based in an audience-suggested location. The scene takes a film noir style, both in content and mood, as well as by breaking the fourth wall to approach the camera and narrate. Appropriate pre-recorded music is played during the scene.

38. **News Report**: The four performers enact a news report on the topic of a fairy tale or Biblical story. The country in which the report will take place is also chosen. One performer is the news anchor, another is an expert in the studio, another is a field reporter, and the fourth plays several characters interviewed by the reporter.

39. **Quiz Show**: One performer is the host of an audience-suggested quiz show, while the other three are as contestants.

40. **Secret**: Two performers act out a given scene which begins shortly before one performer's secret object is discovered by the other. The location of the secret is audience-suggested.

**Quirk/identity games**
The following games are based on one or more performers having a strange quirk or identity:

41. **Change Emotion**: Three performers are given an actual prop; whoever holds it must express a given emotion as they act out a given scene. Occasionally, two or three props are used, each assigned a different emotion.

42. **Multiple Personalities**: A variation in which there are three props, and each is assigned a different famous identity. The performers must bear the identity associated with whatever prop(s) they are holding. Frequently, the props in question are given from one performer to another spontaneously, forcing the performer to do a new improvisation based on the prop he has just received.

43. **Fixed Expressions**: The performers act out a scene while each must maintain a fixed facial expression. Each performer is given a different emotion to emulate.

44. **Here He Is Now**: Two performers await the arrival of the others and discuss their idiosyncrasies. The other performers then arrive and must enact the traits that were assigned to them.
45. Old Job, New Job: Two to four performers enact a given scene in which one of the performers displays traits of his given old job while performing his new job.

46. Superheroes: One performer superhero with an odd audience-suggested identity. He faces an audience-suggested crisis, and is joined by another performer. In welcoming this performer, he provides them another odd superhero identity. The third and fourth performers arrive in turn, and are named by their predecessors as well. Then, after the crisis is solved, the performers depart in reverse order. The superhero names are typically in stereotypical superhero form (e.g. [something]-man, or [something]-girl) with an unusual identifying characteristic or power.

47. Strange Bedfellows: Three performers are roommates, but each is given a celebrity impression to do during the scene and must solve a problem in the apartment.

48. Unlikely Couples/Couples: Two performers play a scene, as two people (fictional or real) that wouldn't normally be seen together. Periodically, the host sounds the buzzer and requests audience suggestions for a different pairing.

49. Weird Newscasters: One performer is the lead anchor of a news broadcast who acts normally; the other three are the co-host, sports anchor or finance anchor, and weather anchor, and are each given an odd personality or character which they must exhibit.

Other games

50. Explanation: Two performers play. Both performers must explain something, (for example, the existence of God) in a certain style (i.e. five year olds).

51. Film & Theatre Styles/Film, TV & Theatre Styles: Prior to the scene, the host solicits various styles of film, TV or theatre from the audience. These can be either broad genres (e.g.: sci-fi) or specific titles (e.g.: Star Wars). Two or three performers then begin a given scene; the host periodically stops the scene with a buzzer and chooses an audience-suggested style for the performers to continue the scene in.

52. Change of Company: The four performers enact a given existing fairy tale. The host periodically suggests a profession for the characters to continue the scene as.

53. Emotion Option: Variation on "Film & Theatre Styles" with emotions instead of styles.

54. Film Dub: One to four performers watch a clip from an old (and usually unknown) movie or television show that has been muted. While only the clip is shown on-screen, the performers each provide the dialogue for one of the characters following a given scene suggestion.
55. Film Review: One performer is a film critic and reviews an audience-suggested film, while the other three act out scenes from the film, as prompted by the critic.

56. Film Trailer: One performer provides a voiceover for an audience-suggested film's trailer over provided background music. The other three act out scenes from the film, as prompted by the narrator.

57. Story Teller: One performer is an author, narrating the non-speaking parts of a story. The other three performers portray the characters in the story, entering when prompted by the narration, and saying dialogue. The author works towards an audience-suggested moral of the story.

58. Good Cop/Bad Cop: One performer is a homeowner who has some problem around the house, suggested by the audience, such as a broken down washing machine. Two other performers are the repairmen the first calls in to fix it, formerly partners on the police force who specialized in the good cop/bad cop method of interrogation. They interrogate the homeowner as if s/he committed some crime which caused the issue.

59. Remote Control: The four performers each enact a different given style of television program on the same topic (sometimes given, sometimes audience-suggested). They each perform one-at-a-time, switching when the host sounds the buzzer and chooses the next performer.

Source: Game descriptions adapted from Wikipedia.org (edited to remove those unfit for classrooms)