Theatre sportz

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| Year 6–7 | The Arts — Drama |
| Students participate in improvisation games in a theatre sports competition. They reflect on their own and others’ improvisational skills and give an oral presentation. | |
| **Time allocation** | 1.5–2.5 hours |
| **Student roles** | Section 1 — to be completed as a group but assessed individually  Section 2 — to be completed individually |
| Context for assessment  Improvisation is a form of theatre that does not use a script. Instead, the actors create the dialogue and action themselves, as they perform. One of the most popular styles is TheatreSports™ which uses the format of a competition for dramatic effect. Opposing teams are asked to perform scenes based on suggestions given by the compere or the audience. The emphasis is on building characters and on creating a scene with little pre-planning. Popular television shows, such as *Whose line is it anyway?* and *Thank God you’re here* demonstrate this drama style. Improvisation is fun and there are no right or wrong answers. | |

******This assessment gathers evidence of learning for the following **Essential Learnings**:

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| The Arts Essential Learnings by the end of Year 7 | |
| Ways of working **Students are able to:**   * select and develop ideas for arts works, considering intended audiences and intended purposes, and make decisions about arts elements and languages * create and shape arts works by modifying arts elements to express purpose and to include influences from their own and other cultures and times * modify and polish arts works, using interpretive and technical skills * present arts works to informal and formal audiences for intended purposes, using arts techniques, skills and processes * identify, apply and justify safe practices * respond by analysing and evaluating arts works in social, cultural, historical and spiritual contexts, using arts elements and languages * reflect on learning, apply new understandings and identify future applications. | Knowledge and understanding Drama  **Drama involves modifying dramatic elements and conventions to express ideas, considering intended audiences and intended purposes, through dramatic action based on real or imagined events.**   * Roles and characters can be presented from different perspectives and in different situations, using variations in voice, movement and focus. * Purpose and context are considered when modifying mood, time frames, language, place and space, and are used to express ideas. * Dramatic action is interpreted, prepared and shaped through scenarios and scripts. |
| Assessable elements  * Knowledge and understanding * Creating * Presenting * Responding * Reflecting | |
| Source: Queensland Studies Authority 2007, The Arts Essential Learnings by the end of Year 7, QSA, Brisbane. | |

Listed here are suggested **learning experiences** for students before attempting this assessment.

* Engage in activities that help students accept the fiction in a drama or “suspend disbelief” (e.g. encourage students to believe that there is a door through which a character enters, or an active light switch by which a character lights the stage, when there is actually neither door nor light switch).
* Develop basic improvisational skills and review improvisation terms (see Appendix A: Basic improvisation terms for theatre sports).
* Develop awareness of sensitivity and respect in viewing and reflecting on performances (see Appendix B: Guidelines for playing theatre sports).
* Practise different theatre sports games and improvisational activities in class using different variables of location, character, situation and time (see Appendix C: Games and Appendix D: Ideas for games).
* Use appropriate drama terminology to reflect on and respond to their own improvisation skills and those of others’ after the performance of theatre sports games.
* Use appropriate and effective vocal and physical skills with consideration to character and situation.
* Develop and sustain a role appropriate to the situation, and understand the relationship of that role to others in the group.
* Shape and construct improvisation.
* Participate in group work to foster awareness of sensitivity, generosity, commitment, concentration and ability to lead and support the group.

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| Icon_Resource | Teacher resources |

### Websites

<www.creativedrama.com/theatre.htm>

<www.theatrelinks.com/theatresports.htm>

<www.fnipgh.com/gameslist.htm#emotion>

<www.fuzzyco.com/super/improv/games.html>

<www.theatresports.org>

<www.learnimprov.com/show\_structures.php?type=2&req=show\_cat>

<www.humanpingpongball.com>

<www.unexpectedproductions.org/living\_playbook.htm>

<www.magicunlimited.com/Pubmagicsports.htm>

<www.improaustralia.com.au>

### Texts

*Improvisation: The guide*, Pierse, L 2006, Improcorp, Kensington.

*Dramactive 1*, Stinson, M & Wall, D 2003, McGraw-Hill, Sydney.

### CD-ROM

*Viola Spolin's theater games for the classroom: A multimedia teacher's guide* (CD-ROM),   
Schafer, M 2003, Northwestern University Press, Evanston (available through www.booknook.com.au).

## redesign headings_developPreparing

Students should be given many opportunities to play the theatre sports games (see Appendix B: Games). They should also be given the opportunity to work in different groups to experience varying group dynamics and characteristics during the practice phase.

## Implementation

Teachers should reinforce that the competition part of the activity is just for fun and to build atmosphere. While the judging should be low-key, teachers do need to ensure comments made about performances and performers are appropriate.

**Setting up groups**

Teachers may need to be involved in the selection process of groups to allow for equity of gender and skills. Changing the groups during the games also gives students an opportunity to work with a number of other people.

**Judging the competition**

The teacher may act in the dual role of compere and judge or invite a group of students, parents or the principal to be the judges for a section of the competition.

**Scoring the competition**

Technique — a score out of 5

Teamwork — a score out of 5

Storyline — a score out of 5

Honourable mentions may also be made at the end of the competition to highlight achievements, such as:

* best player
* best scene
* most memorable moment
* funniest line.

## Sample implementation plan

This table shows one way that this assessment can be implemented. It is a guide only — you may choose to use all, part, or none of the table. You may customise the table to suit your students and their school environment.

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| **Suggested time** | **Student activity** | **Teacher role** |
| **Section 1.** **Play theatre sports games** | | |
| 1–1.5 hours | Work in groups of 3–4 people.  Choose a team name for the group.  Participate in a theatre sports competition.  Get the teacher or a peer to fill in the Checklist of improvisational skills (in the *Student booklet*) after each game.  Work to improve areas that are marked as needing work. | Revise improvisation terms (Appendix A) and reinforce guidelines for playing theatre sports and audience etiquette  (Appendix B).  Organise students into groups of 3–4 people.  Decide on games to be played. Use Appendix C: Games.  Allocate characters and situations for games to be played. Use Appendix D: Ideas for games. |
| **Section 2. Reflect on and respond to theatre sports games** | | |
| 30–60 minutes | Answer reflection questions and use these answers as the basis for an oral presentation. | Guide and assist students as required.  Listen to rough drafts of presentations and provide feedback. |

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| Icon_Resource | Resources for the assessment |

Appendix A Basic improvisation terms for theatre sports

Appendix B Guidelines for playing theatre sports

Appendix C Games

Appendix D Ideas for games

Timing device

Whiteboard or scoring sheet

During the learning process, you and your students should have developed a shared understanding of the curriculum expectations identified as part of the planning process.

After students have completed the assessment, identify, gather and interpret the information provided in student responses. Use only the evidence in student responses to make your judgment about the quality of the student learning. Refer to the following documents to assist you in making standards-referenced judgments:

* *Guide to making judgments*
* *Indicative A response*
* *Sample responses* (where available).

### Making judgments about this assessment

Videoing the students as they take part in theatre sports games would provide supporting evidence for making individual judgments. It is sometimes difficult to make judgments about students in a team situation during a live performance. Evidence can also be gathered over time as students are involved in a number of game situations.

The continua format selected for making judgments about this assessment demonstrates student development using graduated shading from A to E. This format allows expected differences in the qualities of student work to be emphasised along the continuum. An on-balance judgment can be made using these qualities and taking into consideration the assessable elements of the key learning areas.

When making an overall judgment about the quality of the student learning, consideration of the participation of individual students during group work will be required.

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| Icon_ForFurtherHelp | For further information, refer to the resource *Using a Guide to making judgments*, available in the Resources section of the Assessment Bank website. |

Evaluate the information gathered from the assessment to inform teaching and learning strategies.

Involve students in the feedback process. Give students opportunities to ask follow-up questions and share their learning observations or experiences.

Focus feedback on the student’s personal progress. Emphasise continuous progress relative to their previous achievement and to the learning expectations — avoid comparing a student with their classmates.

### Giving feedback about this assessment

Use the Checklist of improvisational skills in the *Student booklet* to give feedback to students. Student feedback can be given individually, or to teams during the learning of the games and the theatre sports competition.

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| Icon_ForFurtherHelp | For further information, refer to the resource *Using feedback*, available in the Resources section of the Assessment Bank website. |

## Basic improvisation terms for theatre sports

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| **Offer** |
| Any action or dialogue that may allow actors to work together to create a scene. Offers should be accepted. A strong offer is an offer that clearly gives a direction into which a scene might evolve. |
| **Accepting** |
| Taking up offers made by other performers in order to advance the scene.  **Example:**  Player One: Is that your car?  Player Two: Yes. Would you like to see how fast it goes? |
| **Blocking** |
| Not accepting other players’ offers, and actually destroying these offers.  This should be avoided.  **Example:**  Player One: Is that your car?  Player Two: No. There's no car here.  Player One: I'll give you $10 for that chicken.  Player Two: No. |
| **Gagging** |
| A player attempts to get a laugh out of the audience when the joke doesn't do anything other than prolong the length of the scene.  **Example:**  Player One: I'll give you $10 for that chicken.  Player Two: That's a bit “poultry”. |
| **Wimping** |
| Uncreative and unhelpful stalling which does not advance or build the situation.  **Example:**  Player One: Look at the chicken over there!  Player Two: Oh really where? |
| **Political incorrectness** |
| Inappropriate comments (e.g. sexist, racist, swearing) will not be tolerated in any game. |

## Guidelines for playing theatre sports

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| **I will:**   * say “yes” to offers and take cues from my other actors * try not to block, ignore or deny my other actors * try not to go for cheap laughs or gags * be spontaneous and active * “do” rather than ask questions * listen * be enthusiastic and focused at all times * change the direction of the scene if it seems to be going nowhere. |

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| **Audience etiquette**   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | **Looks like …**   * people watching attentively * sitting focused looking towards performers * may see people laughing * people working together. | | |  | | **Sounds like …**   * praise and encouragement with clapping at end of performance * positive, respectful comments about performances * laughter and enjoyment of performance. | |  | **Feels like …**   * everyone is valued * worthwhile contributions by all students * motivated, engaged, interested audience * performers trying their best * warm, fun and supportive atmosphere. | | |

## Games

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| **Park bench** |
| **How to play:** Two chairs (or a bench) are placed at the front of the classroom. One student sits on one of the chairs. The setting is a park, and the person on the chair has no character until the second student enters. The second student has decided who they are, and who the student sitting on the park bench is.  For example, the person entering has decided that, "The student on the bench is a famous sports star, and I am a great fan". In this situation, the actor would recognise the person on the bench, react to seeing their favourite sports star in person, ask for an autograph, and tell the athlete about the last game they saw them play. The student actor on the bench has to adapt to the situation, developing their character to suit this situation. The improvisation ends when the student who was originally on the bench finds a suitable reason to leave (e.g. “My limousine has just arrived”). The second student remains on the bench, staying in character from the first situation until a third person from the group enters the game to create a new situation, and so on.  Note: With younger or less experienced actors, the teacher may want to supply the person entering with a character, so that there is no risk of characters being unclear. |
| **Emotion game** |
| **How to play:** Two players are given a situation and a task to complete. The game begins by letting the players set up their environment and start the task. Every so often (about every 30 seconds or so) the compere will stop the action by yelling "freeze!". The players freeze in their physical position and the host supplies an emotion (or asks the audience for an emotion). The players then resume the game, playing the suggested emotion. |
| **Freeze tag** |
| **How to play:** Two students start a scene on a given situation and relationship (e.g. two kids washing a dog). Actors try to work with interesting shape and space relationships. At an appropriate time, a person from the team calls "freeze!". Both actors freeze in their physical position, and another team member enters the acting area, tapping out and taking the frozen position of one of the original students. The new student actor initiates a new scene from the stimulus of the frozen picture. Continue on, repeating the exercise and involving a new actor each time. The game can run for several minutes and players in the team could have a number of turns in the time limit.  Note: Encourage students to let scenes develop before “freeze” is called so students practise building dramatic action. A teacher or another student outside the action may also call “freeze”. |
| **Fairytale in a minute** |
| **How to play:** Players are given a well-known fairy tale (e.g. Goldilocks and the Three Bears). They present this story in less than 1 minute, giving a sense of the beginning, middle and end of the story and all characters involved. It could be a roleplay with all characters involved, use a narrator or perhaps combine the two.  Variation: Movie in a minute. |

## Games (continued)

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| **Space jump** |
| **How to play:** This game consists of a series of different scenes. The first scene has one player, the next has two players, and so on. At some point the next player to come in calls “freeze”, jumps in and justifies the positions, and starts a new scene. This will continue until all players are in the scene.  The first player can be given a situation to get them started.  Variation: Once all players are on stage they leave in the reverse order that they came in. As the players leave, all the previous scenes take place as if time had passed, and players justify their new physical positions. |
| **Typewriter** |
| **How to play:** In this scene one player types out a story. As characters are introduced, players join in to help develop the story. Actors can also add dialogue to the story.  The typist usually sits aside from the other players and starts to type out a story. Everyone appreciates it if the typist mimes typing as they speak.  Variation: As the scene progresses the players acting out the scene share more and more with the typist to drive the scene. Ideally they share the progress of the story, switching from the typist to the players when they slow down, and back again once the players slow down. |

Note: The websites in the Teacher resources contain more games that you could include in the theatre sports competition.

## Ideas for games

**Characters**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| b-boy or b-girl  gangster  spy  postie  florist  elderly person  king or queen | athlete  young child  surgeon  teacher  pilot  flight attendant  social worker | lawyer  police officer  captain  bus driver  plumber  graffiti artist  musician | rock star  secretary  farmer  surfer  politician  author  racing car driver | shop attendant  sportsperson  priest  teenager  chef  baker  angel |

**Situations or actions**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| building a sandcastle  in the desert  having a shower  escaping from jail  making a bed  getting a haircut | disarming a bomb  in a hospital  putting on a disguise  mowing the lawn  opening a present  playing bingo | cleaning the house  at a funeral  washing a dog  making a cake  choosing a pet  hitting a golf ball | on a farm  arranging flowers  meeting your hero  putting up a tent  climbing Mt Everest  eating a big breakfast |

**Storylines**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| African safari  train disaster  the magic toyshop  the mummy’s curse  haunted house  stranded in a lift | on the bank of the river  Jo Jo’s big day!  the lost Amazon tribe  at the midnight hour  underneath the ocean  tragedy at the sawmill | the man in the mirror  the Olympic event  missing person  Alfred’s dream  the lost voice  revenge at the laundrette | the treasure chest  on the way to school  journey into space  pizza-making contest  the big robbery  beach party |

**Emotions**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| joy  anger  hate  grief  happiness  annoyance | fear  envy  excitement  surprise  frustration  jealousy | caution  guilt  confidence  depression  boredom  embarrassment | hope  disgust  distress  pride  shyness  timidity | rage  love  worry  nervousness  confusion  disappointment | impatience  amusement |

**Fairytales and other stories**

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| Goldilocks and Three Bears  Three Little Pigs  Jack and the Beanstalk  Billy Goats Gruff  Cinderella  Little Red Riding Hood | Beauty and the Beast  Gingerbread Man  Hansel and Gretel  The Little Red Hen  Puss in Boots  The Pied Piper | The Ugly Duckling  The Little Mermaid  Sleeping Beauty  Rumpelstiltskin  Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs |

**Hint:** These could be placed on different coloured laminated cards according to the category. They could then be shuffled so students select cards randomly.