

DRAMA GAMES WARM UP

10 Second Objects

Age: 6 to adult

Players: Small Groups

Time: 10-20 minutes

Skills: Mime and movement, Co-operation

Small groups make the shape of an object using their bodies – in only ten seconds!

Summary: This is a very popular drama game and a useful technique which can be developed easily towards improvisation or physical theatre. It's also highly accessible and great fun!

Instructions:

Divide everyone into small groups (4-6). Call out the name of an object and all the groups have to make the shape of that object out of their own bodies, joining together in different ways while you count down slowly from ten to zero. Usually, every group will find a different way of forming the object. These ones are good to try: a car, a clock, a washing machine, a volcano, a fire.

Director's Notes:

- Encourage groups to think about using different levels with their body shapes, e.g. high, medium and low
- Choose objects from a play you are rehearsing or a theme you are exploring
- Groups can be given a couple of minutes to devise an object of their own which the rest of the class try to guess
- It can be fun to make objects that involve movement (and sound)
- You can use the shapes as a quick way to create ideas for physical theatre

Play Online

You can play this game online if you are using Zoom or a similar app where students can see and hear each other. Students will be making the shape on their own. If they need to give a hint, they can add sound and movement. Here are some possibilities:

- Choose a theme, for example the fairground. Each student has to think of an object that could be found at a fairground. Count down from ten, then they have to make the shape of the object they have thought of.
- Other students have to guess what they are. They get a bonus point if they have thought of an object that no-one else has thought of
- Call out a letter of the alphabet and they have to make the shape of an object beginning with that letter
- Objects/characters from a selected story, movie or TV programme
- Location (e.g. objects in an airport)
- An item of food
- Secretly choose an object from the room they are in
- Modes of transport, famous buildings, furniture, animals...
- Tip If you have a large group, mute students' microphones until it is their turn.

DRAMA GAMES MAIN ACTIVITY

Titania and Oberon WHOOSH

Age: 5 to adult

Players: Whole Group

Time: 20-30 minute

Skills: Mime, movement, co-operation and concentration

This engaging and interactive storytelling technique enables any kind of story – simple or complex – to be brought alive, even without prior knowledge of the characters or plot. As well as being the storyteller, the leader has a guiding role similar to that of an orchestral conductor or theatre director. Participants play characters, objects, places or events in the story, for example, a window, a church, a ship, the sun or a storm.

Instructions:

The whole group stands or sits in a circle. Explain that everybody will have an opportunity to participate in the telling of a story by becoming characters or even objects in the tale. If at any time you say “Whoosh!” they should quickly return to their places. Begin the narrative and as soon as a key character, event or object is mentioned, indicate the first student to step into the circle to make a shape or pose. If two or more characters are introduced, then they can step in at the same time.

As more characters or objects are introduced, move around the circle so that all the students are given a chance to take part. This means that different pupils get to play the same character at various times, and everyone gets a chance at trying several roles, regardless of gender. If appropriate the whole group can take part at once – for example, as a forest. The story continues to be told with more students stepping in as required so that a tableau is quickly built up.

Pupils begin by simply making a still image, then start to act out the story through movement as the narrative progresses. They can interact with one another and even speak improvised dialogue or repeat lines spoken by you. If you like you can add some props for them to play with – you may end up getting some great ideas on the spur of the moment!

Any time that the activity inside the circle becomes too lively, congested or confused, simply wave your arms, say “Whoosh!” and everyone returns to their original places. The story continues to be told and characters step into the space as required. You can say “Whoosh!” as many times as necessary during the story – it’s a very useful secret weapon!

Whoosh can be done with students of all ages – you just need to choose an appropriate story. The technique was devised by Dr Joe Winston of The University of Warwick and is regularly used by the Royal Shakespeare Company.

TITANIA AND OBERON WHOOSH (continued)

This is a story of fairies, a magical flower and donkey ears...

Once upon a time there was an enchanted forest. In the forest were magical trees – one, two, three. The leaves of the trees would whisper secret messages to each other in the night. And of course there were fairies. Oberon was king of all the fairies in the woods. He was extremely handsome and wise. He had a clever servant called Puck, who worked for him throughout the night. Puck would bring Oberon delicious food to eat and special ingredients for his magic spells, like mushrooms and flowers and spiders. Puck liked to get up to mischief and played tricks on everyone he met.

The queen of the fairies was called Titania. She was so gorgeous that if a man even glanced at her, he would fall in love for ever. One midsummer night, Titania called for her fairy servants. Here are four of them – Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed. They were so tiny that you could hardly see them at all. They fluttered around on delicate wings to bring Titania whatever she needed – delicious food, fine clothes and fragrant flowers to sleep on. How happy they all were in the enchanted wood.

Whoosh!

But on this midsummer night something happened. You see, Titania and her fairies – one, two, three, four – were looking after a beautiful and proud young Indian prince. They decided to make him a beautiful crown of flowers. But Oberon tried to take the boy away from Titania. He thought the prince could serve him as a brave knight, guarding the enchanted forest. Titania would not let him take her prince, so the king and queen of the fairies had a big argument. Their voices were so loud that the fairies hid under tiny acorn cups. The winds blew, the rains fell, the puddles grew deep, the forest was flooded and covered in fog.

Whoosh!

So Oberon thought of a clever plan. He summoned his servant Puck. 'Fetch me a magic flower,' said Oberon. Puck flew off to look in the forest. Soon he found the flower and brought it back for Oberon. In another part of the forest, Titania was feeling tired, so her fairies sang her a Lulla-lulla-lullaby – that's how it went! She fell fast asleep and the fairies flew away.

Oberon crept up and squeezed the juice of the flower into her eyes. He whispered 'what you see when you awake, will you for your true-love take.' Oberon and Puck hid behind some trees. Nearby were some actors practising a play. One of them was called Nick Bottom. He walked behind the trees but he couldn't see the fairies – they were invisible. Puck played a trick. He magically turned Bottom's head into the head of a donkey with big long ears! At that moment Titania woke up. The first person she saw was Bottom. 'What an angel!' she said.

Whoosh!

Titania had fallen in love with Bottom, even though he had big donkey ears. She summoned her fairies: 'Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed!' They came flying in. 'Ready' they said. Titania told them, 'Bring my love whatever he wants.' So the fairies brought him apricots and grapes, figs and honey. Bottom's head was so hairy that it felt really itchy. Two of the fairies scratched his head and the others fanned him with their butterfly wings. Titania tied flowers around his long donkey ears and fed him oats and hay, which made him very happy. Soon they all fell fast asleep. Bottom started snoring.

Oberon and Puck crept in to watch. Oberon was pleased with the trick they had played. He waved his hand to remove the spell from Titania. 'Awake, my sweet queen,' he said. Titania woke and took one look at the man with the donkey head. 'What an ugly face!' she said. Puck waved his hand and Bottom's donkey head disappeared. Oberon and Titania smiled at each other. They were friends again. At that moment a bird started singing in the trees. It was nearly morning! The fairies vanished and Bottom wandered off to find his friends.

And that is where our story ends.

Whoosh!