



Soapbox

Lesson 2

What's Your Point?

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Equipment

- One pen per child
- Flipchart paper
- 30 fun 'prizes'
- Soapbox Challenge score board with 'Team A' and 'Team B' and 'Questions 1-3' written on it
- Two pieces of script for the introduction on debating (highlighted with large asterisks on next page)
- One exercise book per child
- Marker pen
- Gaffer tape

Commands

- Go
- Countdown
- Freeze
- Hands Up! Rule

- Before the class arrives, mark out a stage area at one end of the room as in Lesson 1. The group should be excited and interested, so use this to your advantage by beginning with the rules which will still seem unusual and fun rather than controlling.

Warm Up (2 Exercises)

- Begin the session with the same warm up exercises as Lesson 1. Repetition of the warm up games is important at this stage as the familiarity reinforces to the group that they are back in a drama session.
- For both Say My Name! and Name and Action you're looking to not only improve confidence and voice but also teamwork. Remember that your participants may never have worked liked this before so any exercise where they are supporting one another needs constant encouragement.

2.1 Say My Name! (5 Minutes)

- Bring the group to a standing circle using the Go command and Countdown command. Then simply repeat the Say My Name! exercise as before, encouraging the group to be even louder and more confident.

2.2 Name & Action (5 Minutes)

- Again simply repeat the exercise, continuing to encourage them to be as bold and expressive as possible. You can develop this exercise further by encouraging participants to perform their actions in the centre of the circle, and getting the rest of the group to copy.

2.3 Old Vic Soapbox Challenge (10 Minutes)

- Using the last lesson's pairing technique, allocate alternate participants as A or B. Bring all the As into a line behind one another and all the Bs into a line behind one another. You now have two teams. On the Go command and the Countdown command, allocate separate areas of the room to Group A and Group B.
- Once settled, and on the Countdown command, inform the groups that they must elect one spokesperson from their group. It is important that each group works this out for themselves, so try not to intervene unless really necessary.
- Once completed, bring the group to silence on the Freeze command and ask Team A's spokesperson to stand up and Team B's spokesperson to stand up. You should then ask for two volunteers, one from each team, using the Hands Up! rule. The two volunteers will fill in the score boards.
- Using the Go command and Countdown command you should ask the following questions, keeping careful score on the scoreboards. You should decide how you do this and how many 'points' you allocate for a correct answer. Answers are indicated in brackets below.
 - What form of communication involves action but no words? (Mime)
 - Working together means forming a bond of _____? (Trust)
 - _____ is the best way to communicate with an actor on stage? (Eye Contact)
 - What action is required of you when you want to ask or answer a question? (Hands Up)
 - What will I do to get you to be quiet? (Shout Freeze)
- Once all questions have been answered, add up the scores and pronounce one team as the winner, promising a prize at the end of the session.
- On the Go command and Countdown command, ask the group to form a seated audience at the front of the marked-out stage area.

2.4 Stage Magnets 2 (10 Minutes)

- Position yourself centre stage and, as in the previous session, go over the five basic stage directions, moving yourself to each of the areas you're talking about as you do so. Then mark out an exit arrow pointing off to stage right and an entrance arrow to stage left using the gaffer tape.
- Explain that the exit arrow represents the command 'exit stage right' and the entrance arrow 'entrance stage left'.
- You should demonstrate the two new commands by exiting off the stage, walking around the back of the audience, then entering stage left and returning back to centre stage.
- Two new stage directions should be added to your list ie;

• Stage left	• Centre stage
• Stage right	• Downstage
• Upstage	• Exit stage right
• Entrance stage left	
- Demonstrate all the stage directions once more before exiting the stage and asking the group to enter stage left, gathering centre stage on the Go command and Countdown command.
- From your position off stage, randomly call out all seven stage directions for the group to follow before finally asking them to exit stage right and sit as a seated audience again.

2.5 What's Your Point? (10 Minutes)

Having established some of the themes of Soapbox, and the way in which the sessions will run, it is now time to introduce more theatre-based exercises and terminology. Again, this section presumes that you, the user, have little or no experience of teaching drama.

- Speaking from centre stage and using the Hands Up! rule ask the group the following questions, asking for feedback after each one.

Who has a mobile phone?
Who thinks they should be allowed a mobile phone in school?
Who thinks they don't need a mobile phone in school?

- Having received suitable feedback, you should pick two of the most confident participants and bring them onto the stage, handing them two pieces of script (copied from right). One piece of script is in favour of the use of mobile phones in school and the other piece of script is against the use of mobile phones in school.
- Each of the two participants chosen should briefly get the opportunity to familiarise themselves with their script while you take further feedback from the rest of the group. Each of the two participants should then recite their scripts to the rest of the group from centre stage.
- After the speeches, you should ask the group what the two 'actors' on stage were doing, the correct answer being debating.

IN FAVOUR SCRIPT

I think children should be allowed phones in school because it means teachers can find them at all times.

It also means they can communicate with their friends by texting and it means they can play games on their phones in break time.

AGAINST SCRIPT

I don't think children should be allowed mobile phones in school as it distracts them from their school work.

They may misplace it or have their phone stolen. If they need to make a phone call, they can always ask a teacher to use a school phone.

2.6 To Bed! (10 Minutes)

- On the Go command and Countdown command ask Team A to find a space in the room and Team B to find a space in the room. When settled, ask each team to elect a spokesperson. Each spokesperson should then be handed a marker pen and flipchart paper. Team A and Team B are now debating against one another on the topic of Bed Time Curfew with Team A against a bed time curfew and Team B for a bed time curfew. On the Go command each team is directed to begin brainstorming on their flipchart paper.
- After five minutes, bring the group to silence on the Freeze command. Beginning with Team A and followed by Team B, ask the spokesperson from each to present their point of view to the rest of the group using the ideas from their flipchart paper.

2.7 Feedback (5 Minutes)

- Remaining in groups, and using the Hands Up! rule, ask for feedback from each team on how it felt to be 'for' and 'against'.

2.8 Trisha & Jerry (10 Minutes)

- After sufficient feedback, roughly split the two teams into groups of five and allocate each group an area in the room, ensuring you keep the 'Fors' together and the 'Againsts' together in the same small groups. Using the Freeze command, bring the group to silence and then explain that each team is about to appear on the Trisha talk show or the Jerry talk show. The spokesperson from each team must now give each of their group a character: one of which must be Trisha or Jerry, and the remainder are to be decided by the group. Using the points of view they've already used, each group must improvise a scene as if they were on TV talk show.

2.9 Talk Show (10 Minutes)

- On the Freeze command, bring all the groups back together to form an audience in front of the stage. Two groups at a time are asked to enter stage left and act out their rehearsed scene against one another. This clearly demonstrates the difference of opinion as well as the ethos of the lesson's subject. (One group may have to go twice if there are insufficient numbers.)

2.10 Final Individual Feedback (15 Minutes)

- This should be done straight after the session and, if possible, where the session has taken place.
- Each participant should be given a pen and exercise book and asked to find a space in the room on their own. They should then write their name, date and title of the session on the top of the page.
- Final Individual Feedback time is incredibly important as, so far, the participants have worked in pairs, small groups and as a whole, but the Final Individual Feedback exercise is a clear indication of what they have and haven't understood.
- This section should be led by you with the following as suggested questions:
 - What do you think debating means?
 - What did it feel like to have a difference of opinion with someone?
 - What have you learnt today?
- As a treat give a prize to everyone in the group saying you think everyone has done equally well.

What's Your Point? Outcomes

- Continued teamwork
- Continued pair work
- Continued individual work
- Continued confidence building
- Improving imagination
- Increasing vocabulary
- Clearer understanding of what it's like to try to get a point across
- Beginnings of movement and character building
- Improved projection, articulation and enunciation in a large group setting