



Soapbox

# Lesson 3

## Body Talk

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### Equipment

- One pen per child
- Flipchart paper
- 30 fun 'prizes'
- 15 emotionless, characterless masks
- Soapbox Challenge score board with 'Team A' and 'Team B' and 'Questions 1–4' written on it
- One exercise book per child
- Marker pen
- 15 small hand held mirrors

### Commands

- Go
- Countdown
- Freeze
- Hands Up! Rule

## Warm Up

- Begin the session with the same warm up exercises as in Lesson 1 and Lesson 2. The familiarity reinforces to the group that they are back in a drama session and you should see improved concentration and teamwork.

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### 3.1 Say My Name! (5 Minutes)

- Bring the group to a standing circle using the Go command and Countdown command. Then repeat the exercise, encouraging them to be even louder and more confident than before.

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### 3.2 Name & Action (5 Minutes)

- Repeat as before, but with even more encouragement.

### 3.3 Touch, Roll, Jump (5 Minutes)

- This exercise is great for improving teamwork and communication as well as making participants aware of movement and physicality.
- Using the Go command and Countdown command ask the whole group to begin walking around the room ensuring they don't follow one another like sheep! Each participant should be encouraged to use the whole space and work individually rather than simply walking around talking to friends.
- Use the Freeze command to bring the group to silence and ask them to face in your direction. You now need to demonstrate the three Touch, Roll, Jump movements as follows:
  - Touch** – touch the floor
  - Jump** – jump in the air
  - Roll** – roll over gently on the floor
- You may feel uneasy about this if you've never taught drama before. However, it is incredibly important that your group see you taking part in physical exercises, particularly as this lesson's topic is body language. Once you have demonstrated these simple movements, on the Go command ask the group to begin walking around the room. Now begin randomly calling out each of the commands: 'touch', 'roll' and 'jump'. When you feel the group is proficient at following these instructions, add in a Change Direction command so that, whichever way they are walking, they should turn and go in the opposite direction.

### 3.4 Soapbox Challenge (10 Minutes)

- Using the team-splitting technique from the previous lesson, allocate Team A and Team B, ensuring that the make up of the teams is different from the previous time.
- As before, each team has 20 seconds to elect a spokesperson who will feed back the team's answers.
- Both teams should be given flipchart paper and a marker pen to jot down ideas.
- Using the Go command for each question, you should ask the following questions (see right), keeping careful score as you go (answers are indicated below the questions in brackets).
- Once all the questions have been asked, add up the scores and pronounce one team as the winner, promising a prize at the end of the session.

#### SOAPBOX CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

**Another word for discussing different opinions is known as what?**

*(Debating)*

**Can you name three possible stage positions?**

*(Any three of the following: Stage left, Stage right, Centre stage, Downstage, Upstage, Exit stage right, Entrance stage left)*

**Remembering the previous lesson's group scenes, what was the method chosen to present our work?**

*(Talk show)*

**Name two ways by which you can communicate without speaking.**

*(Eye contact, mime)*

### 3.5 Gesture Pass (10 Minutes)

- Using the Countdown command and Go command, bring the group to a standing circle. You should then demonstrate a positive 'gesture': this can be as simple as waving at someone or giving them the thumbs up. The gesture should be repeated by all participants, passing around the circle in a clockwise direction. Once the gesture has been around the circle, you should pick a 'volunteer' from the group to come up with their own positive gesture, and pass it around the circle. Everyone in the circle should have a turn. Once completed, you should demonstrate a negative gesture such as shaking your fist or stamping your foot. This negative gesture should be passed around the group in a clockwise direction until everyone has had a turn.
- Once completed, obtain feedback from the group by asking the following questions:
 

<b>What did it feel like to be positive?</b>	<b>What did it feel like to be negative?</b>
<b>We were using our bodies in the last exercise; what other word can we use to describe the way our bodies were talking to one another?</b>	
- The answer to the final question is body language; the theme of this lesson.

### 3.6 Mask & Mirror (15 Minutes)

- Pair up the group using the 'A' and 'B' pairing technique from Lesson 1. Once successfully paired up, give the As a mirror each and the Bs a mask each, ensuring they do not put the mask on until instructed to do so.
- Once the allocation of equipment is complete, you should instigate a new rule – once a participant puts on their mask, they cannot speak. Ask As to hold up their mirrors and Bs to put on their masks. The Bs should examine themselves in the mirror; this will cause some excitement, but make sure that they stick to your rule of silence. After sufficient time, the pairs should swap over.
- When both pairs have had a turn, the masks should be taken off and the following questions asked:
 

<b>How did it feel to wear the mask?</b>	<b>What's the effect of having an expressionless face?</b>
<b>Did the mask make you feel positive or negative?</b>	
- Whoever is holding the mask should put it on again, whilst their partner returns the mirrors to you, and then rejoins their partner. Using the Countdown command and the Go command, the 'masked' pupil of the pair should begin moving around the space, using their body in a negative or positive way, depending on how the mask makes them feel. Their partner should shadow them, copying everything they do. After a short time, the pairs should swap roles and repeat the exercise.

### 3.7 Body Language Scenes (15 Minutes)

- Using the Freeze command, bring the group to silence. Ask those wearing masks to remove them.
- Roughly split the group into smaller teams of four or five, making sure each team has two masks each.
- Tell each group that they are going to prepare a two minute scene, and that they must do this using just two emotions. It may be useful at this point to explain what the term emotion means getting suggestions from your group as you do so.
- You will give each team the emotions, eg; anger, happiness, sadness or fear. Ideally the emotions should alternate back and forth between those wearing the masks and those who are unmasked. Each of the pairs should have a go at wearing the mask and leading the exercise.

### 3.8 Show Back

- As evidenced in previous lessons, Show Back is an incredibly important part of any session, giving all the participants the chance to demonstrate what they've learnt and reinforcing the performance element.
- Bring the group to silence with the Freeze command and ask those wearing masks to remove them. Compliment the group on their hard work and ask them to form a seated audience facing you.
- Position yourself on the stage area and, before the Show Back begins, you should quickly remind them about stage positions, before inviting them onstage, pair by pair, to perform.

### 3.9 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. At the top of the page, ask them to write their name, date and title of the session.
- Final Individual Feedback time is incredibly important as, so far, the group has worked in pairs, small groups and as a whole, but the Final Individual Feedback exercise is a clear indication of what they have and have not understood.
- Ask each participant to write down their personal responses to the following questions:
  - What is positive and negative body language?
  - What was it like to work together?
  - How did it feel to watch?
  - Which did you prefer: being a mask or being a shadow?
  - What was your overall impression of the session?
- Give a prize to everyone in the group, saying you think everyone has done equally well.

### Body Talk Outcomes:

- Clearer understanding of body language
- Continued teamwork
- Continued pair work
- Continued individual work
- Further understanding of theatre techniques
- Increased theatrical vocabulary

