

Soapbox

Lesson 4

Can't Hear You!

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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
- 30 pieces of script highlighted with a large asterisk (on back page)
- One exercise book per child
- Marker pen
- A verse from a children's poem of your choice

Commands

- Go
- Countdown
- Freeze
- Hands Up! Rule
- Before the class arrives, mark out a stage area at one end of the room as in previous lessons. 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

- Your group should now feel comfortable about taking part in your drama sessions, so in this lesson you can begin to introduce variations on your warm up games. The suggested order is listed below but you may decide to do things differently depending on which of the exercises you find work best with your particular group.

4.1 Say My Name! (5 Minutes)

- As in Lessons 1–3, bring the group to a standing circle using the Go command and Countdown command. Begin the Say My Name! exercise as usual, but on the second lap of the circle stand in the middle and tell the group you are now their 'conductor'. This means that when you raise your arms, they are to project (speak) loudly and when you lower your arms, they are to project quietly.

4.2 Name & Action (5 Minutes)

- Lead the exercise, as in previous lessons, with lots of encouragement.

4.3 Soapbox Challenge Questions (10 Minutes)

- Using the team-splitting technique, allocate Teams A and B, again ensuring that the make up of the teams is different from the previous two lessons. Give each team 20 seconds to elect a spokesperson to feed back their team's answers.
- Using the Go command and Countdown command, you should ask the following questions, keeping careful score (answers are indicated in brackets):
 - What should you never do when you're wearing a mask? (Speak)
 - What is body language?
 - What is team work?
- You should declare one team the winners and promise a prize at the end of the session.

4.4 Touch, Roll, Jump (5 Minutes)

- ➔ As you will have seen from last time, this is a very active exercise, and so is perfect for beginning the session. It can also be adapted for this lesson's theme of Tone & Projection. Using the Go command and Countdown command, ask the group to begin walking around the room, using the whole space, before reminding them of the actions, Touch, Roll, Jump. After sufficient time, bring the group to silence with the Freeze command.
- ➔ Keeping in mind this lesson's theme, tell the group that on your Go command they are to begin moving around the room again, but this time, instead of waiting for you to call out the commands, it will be up to the group to do so ie; anyone from the group can call out a command at any time. This will begin quite chaotically at first but, after the initial excitement, you should ask the group to begin listening more carefully and only comply with the commands that seem the friendliest in their tone and projection. This will also neatly introduce the theme.



4.5 Rhythm & Rhyme (10 Minutes)

- ➔ Using the Countdown command and Go command, bring the group to a standing circle. It is at this point that you will introduce a children's poem of your choice. It should be relatively easy to learn and may be a poem that you have already worked on in class. Having recited it once through, you should then ask your group to repeat it back several times until you feel they're relatively familiar with it.
- ➔ At this point you should introduce a simple rhythm to accompany the text: I suggest stamping your feet or clapping your hands (or both). Having repeated the poem several times through with the actions, bring the group to silence. Place yourself in the middle of the circle and inform the group that you are now the conductor.
- ➔ This means that you will use several commands, which the group must follow. These are:
 - Full Voice (Loud)
 - Whisper (Quiet)
 - Angry
 - Happy
- ➔ You should begin the Rhythm and Rhyme poem again, introducing the commands as you do so. Once this is clearly understood and is working well, you should ask for volunteers from the group to be conductors, and issue commands. Ideally you should try and get the whole group to be conductors one at a time so everyone has a turn. After sufficient time, ask the group to sit on the floor in silence ready for the feedback section.

4.6 Feedback (10 Minutes)

- ➔ By this point you will have introduced two very simple tone and projection exercises which can be used as stimuli for discussion.
- ➔ Suggested questions are:
 - Do you think people are more likely to listen to you when you speak someone nicely than they are if you speak to them aggressively?
 - What did it feel like to be a conductor?
 - Did you feel more confident when you were whispering or speaking loudly?
 - How did it make you feel when other people in the group were speaking aggressively?

4.7 Scripts (10 Minutes)

- Pair the group up using the pairing technique as before. Give each pair the following piece of script:

A: You!
 B: What?
 A: Are you deaf?
 B: No
- Each pair should practise their lines several times through until they are familiar with the text. Once they have done this, you should get brief feedback. Then ask the pairs to keep repeating the text but, every time they do so, to take a step away from each other. This will mean that each pair naturally gets louder and louder and will start to make dramatic choices about how to deliver their script ie; the tone and projection to use in order to be heard by their partner.
- After sufficient time you should bring the group to silence on the Freeze command. Ask a few of the pairs to perform their pieces where they are stood while the rest of the group observes.
- You should now give a pen and pad to each participant. On flipchart paper, or an overhead projector, write down the following headings:

Where are you?	Who are you?	What do you feel like?
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- Using the script as a stimulus, each pair should try and answer the questions above. You should refer back to the exercises that have formed the session so far. Ask each pair to decide where they felt most comfortable with their partner eg; standing near to them or further away, what it felt like to speak loudly or quietly etc.

4.8 Show Back (10 Minutes)

- Using the Freeze command, Countdown command and Go command, bring the group to a seated audience in front of you, ensuring everyone is clear where the stage area is. Positioning yourself on stage, you should quickly go over the stage directions once more before inviting each pair to perform their piece, ensuring you give feedback after each one. You should be able to stimulate quite a bit of debate around the subject of tone and projection and how important it is to speak clearly but appropriately.
- Give a prize to everyone in the group saying you think everyone has done equally well.

4.9 Final Individual Feedback (10 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
- Each participant should write their name, date and title of the session on the top of the page.
- As always, the final exercise should be about each participant's responses, giving a clear indication of what they have and haven't understood.

Suggested questions:

What did you enjoy best and why?
 What didn't you enjoy and why?
 What is appropriate tone and projection?

- Once the Final Individual Feedback section is complete, collect the exercise books in and keep safely for the next lesson.

Can't Hear You! Outcomes:

- Improved articulation and projection
- Establishing and maintaining a group rhythm
- Identifying negative and positive communication skills
- Identifying appropriate levels of tone and projection