

Clap Rhythm

This encourages concentration, quick reactions and teamwork.

- Ask participants to stand in a circle.
- Start clapping a simple rhythm and ask participants to copy the rhythm exactly, adopting the same speed as you. For example;

Stamp left foot (count 1)
Stamp right foot (count 2)
Slap left thigh (count 3)

Slap right thigh (count 4)
Tap left side of chest (count 5)
Tap right side of chest (count 6)

Clap with both hands (count 7)
Pause (count 8)

- Unexpectedly change the rhythm by taking out the first and last beats and varying the tempo.

Bob, Bob, Bob

This warm up game is to encourage participants to focus on listening skills, and engage with simple character work.

- Ask participants to form a circle with you standing in the middle.
- Explain that you will point to a participant and say one of these phrases:

Bob, Bob, Bob – the participant has to say 'Bob' before you finish saying all three.

Elephant – the participant has to demonstrate the elephant's trunk, while the people standing either side demonstrate the elephant's ears.

James Bond – the participant has to stand like James Bond and those either side as his bodyguards on bended knees.

Top of the Pops – the participant has to mime singing a song into a microphone and those either side must demonstrate the backing dancers.

- Vary the frequency of simply saying 'Bob, Bob, Bob' with the unexpected and random additions of the other phrases.
- Vary the speed of the game to add energy and fun.

I Am a Gnome

This exercise encourages participants to think about the use of the five senses in the creative process and helps to develop trust and sensitivity within the group. This is also a good opportunity for you to introduce the role of the audience.

- Ask participants to walk slowly around the room in different directions with their eyes closed, hands out in front.
- Their aim is to try not to bump into each other (or obstacles in the room!) despite having their eyes closed.
- Move around in the space and repeat the following: *'I am a gnome, and I want to roam, and I'm coming to get you!'*
- Participants need to avoid being 'eaten' by you – which means getting close to them and tapping them on their back. They must listen to where your voice is coming from and avoid it by walking in the opposite direction.
- Once caught, participants become the audience and are encouraged to watch and observe the reactions of those being caught from the sidelines. Comments on the participants' reactions can be discussed at the end of the exercise.

Opposites

This exercise is designed to raise the energy in the group, and encourage listening skills. Participants must respond and react to the demands you make when calling out the following:

Go – Walk around the whole space
Stop – Freeze on the spot as quickly as possible
Down – Sit down as quickly as possible
Up – Stand up as quickly as possible

Left wall – Run as quickly as possible to the left side of the room and touch the wall
Right wall – Run as quickly as possible to the right side of the room and touch the wall

Once participants are competent at responding and reacting quickly, the workshop leader then replays the exercise but the participants must respond to the opposite of all of the commands (eg stop when you say 'go', or sit down when you say 'up').

Shark Attack

This exercise is useful for encouraging teamwork within the group.

- Lay sheets of A3 paper on the floor, which represent islands in the sea and a 'safe' area.
- Ask participants to demonstrate swimming in the sea and begin to move around the room.
- Say the following: *'I may shout out "shark attack!" at any moment and you must respond by working together to help each other onto the islands and support each other to remain on land without falling into the sea'.*
- As the exercise continues, begin to make the islands smaller in size by ripping the paper, which will make the exercise more difficult. Encourage participants to be inventive when helping each other to stay on the islands (they might try to climb onto one another's backs, or stand on one leg, etc).



Pass the Squeeze

This exercise aims to aid concentration.

- Ask participants to sit in two straight lines pointing towards the front of the room, with everyone facing the front. Sit in-between the two lines at the back of the room.
- Flip a coin. If the coin falls on heads, the participant at the back of each line gently squeezes the shoulders of the person in front. The squeeze is passed gradually down the line from one student to another. When the squeeze reaches the front, the participant at the very front jumps up and runs to the back of the line. The participant who sits down first wins their team a point. Participants must only respond if the coin falls on heads. Excitement and anticipation often makes participants send a squeeze by accident, so a great deal of concentration is required.

Count to One Minute

This exercise will help develop concentration and focus.

- Ask participants to find a space in the room, lie on their backs and close their eyes.
- On a starting command, ask them to count to one minute in their heads and come to a sitting position once they've finished, staying silent as other people may be still counting.
- Time the exercise to see who sits up on 60 seconds. This exercise is more difficult than you first think!

Sleeping Pirates

- Participants sit in a circle and link arms.
- Ask for a volunteer to become the pirate. They will guard a bunch of keys. The keys open an imaginary lock on a secret treasure chest.
- Another volunteer will be the thief and will creep into the circle and steal the bunch of keys from the pirate who has fallen asleep.
- Once the thief is back seated, the rest of the group shout out 'Wake up pirate!' This signifies that the pirate can open his or her eyes.
- The volunteer has to decide who has stolen the keys. They have a total of three guesses. When they are ready to guess, they must point at whoever they think has the keys and shout out 'Have you got my keys?'
- The person accused must reply truthfully either 'I'm innocent' or 'I'm guilty'.
- If the participant is guilty they must run as fast as they can around the circle and back to their place without being tapped on the shoulder by the pirate.