

Drama

Warm up and cool down games

Warm - up /name games

Play the following games to warm up the group and to help you to begin to learn their names.

1. The name game

- Each person jumps into the circle and makes a gesture whilst saying their name. (start with yourself)
- The rest of the group copy action and say the person's name.
- The first time round say name normally, then whisper, then shout, then angrily, then happily.

2. The initials game

Each person has to think of something they like to do, which matches their initials e.g. "I'm Jessica and I like jumping" (everybody jumps around with her). Use surnames as well to extend the game

3. The enthusiasm game

Take it in turns to suggest an activity which can be quite mundane, but the whole group has to shout enthusiastically "Yes! Let's!" in response to any suggestions, then you all do the activity together. This will work best if you suggest the first two or three things then let others shout them out.

e.g. teacher - "Let's touch our noses"
 class - "Yes, let's!" (all touch noses enthusiastically)
 teacher - "Let's clap our hands / turn around / lie on the floor / hop on one leg" etc.
 class - "Yes, let's!"

Make your final suggestion "Let's all sit quietly in a circle boy- girl- boy - girl"

Games to mix the class up!

1. Who likes Boyzone?

All sit in a circle. Choose someone to stand in the middle and take their chair away. The person in the middle makes a statement such as 'Change places if you like Drama' The seated members of the group must swap seats with someone else if the question relates to them. The person in the middle has to find a seat too! The result is that there is always someone left without a seat. They then make another statement like 'Change places if you have blond hair' and the game continues.

Note: It is important to discourage pushing in this game, and for reluctant pupils, statements to do with facts (like blue eyes, blond hair etc) work better!

2. Fruit Salad

An old favourite with many variations!

- Sit in circle. Choose 4 or 5 fruits and go round the circle giving each person the name of a fruit in order, e.g. orange, apple, banana, kiwi ...
- Choose someone to stand in the middle and take away their chair. This person then calls out the name of a fruit. Students who are that fruit must change their seat while the person in the middle tries to find a seat too. Whoever is left over becomes the person in the middle.
- Carry on using different combinations of fruit and even saying 'fruit salad' which means everybody must swap places at once.

Games to develop group co-operation

1. The numbers game

The aim of this game is for the group to count to 10 or 20 or 10 and back to 1 without two people speaking at the same time.

- all stand in a circle. Wait for silence
- someone says “one” and sits down
- the people on either side of this person are now excluded from saying “two” but anyone else in the circle can
- keep going until two people try to say a number at the same time or until someone tries to follow the number said by the person next to them
- if someone goes wrong, the game starts again
- give them five or six goes to reach the target you have set, you will find that they become very focused
- discourage anyone who tries to instigate a pattern
- if someone tries to follow the person next to them, they should miss a go but that is at your discretion

Variations: sitting in a circle with eyes closed, sitting in circle facing out, standing rather than sitting when saying a number, odd numbers, missing out numbers divisible by 3, 5...

2. Follow the leader

- All sit or stand in a circle. Begin the game when everybody is sitting in the same position as you.
- Lead the circle through a series of moves for the first practice run. The class must follow each move you make as smoothly and as accurately as possible. Example: Stand up. Cross your legs. Put your hands on your lap etc.
- Once they have got the hang of it choose a volunteer to be the detective. They should leave the room while you choose another leader. When the detective returns he or she stands in the centre of the circle and is allowed three guesses at who is leading the moves.

3. Get organised race!

Put the class into groups of 4 – 6. Ask them to organise themselves into a line as quickly as possible. The order they should be in can vary from very easy (tallest to shortest) to more complicated (e.g. birthdays, number of pets, number in the family etc).

Variation: Give the whole class a similar task!

4. Tallest – shortest circle

- All stand on chairs in a tight circle
- Their task is to get into height order (so that the tallest and shortest are standing next to each other). Only one person can move at a time and no-one is allowed to touch the floor.

Games to develop mime skills

1. What's the Chair?

Place a chair in the centre of the circle and pupils take turns to mime what they imagine it to be:, for example: a post box, a kitchen sink, a dog, a naughty schoolboy, a new car.

The person who guesses correctly takes their place in the middle.

2. Kids take over

- in a circle, walking on the spot
- teacher makes a gesture, in time, that the everyone else imitates
- continue for 8 beats or so, then shout the name of a pupil and they must change or add to the action
- this can continue until the class and the teacher have warmed up

Another way of taking the impetus away from the teacher is to nominate different people to bring a warm up to each lesson (but have a standby ready just in case!).

3. Alert Walking

Everyone moves around the space at a steady walking pace. On a given signal they move in a directed style: Practise freezing also. Ideas for walking styles: slow motion, on the moon, in treacle, very hot shoes, on ice etc.

4. What's my job?

- All sit in a circle. Give everyone an occupation (e.g. policeman, astronaut, postman, teacher). Use each occupation twice, and make sure the occupations are kept secret.
- Pupils use the space to mime their own occupation. Their task is to spot the person with the same occupation as them. When they have done this they should approach their partner, and without speaking, check that they are both miming the same job.
- They should sit down in their pair when they think they have found them.
- The game continues until everybody is sitting down. The teacher should check they are all correct at the end of the game!

Games to develop speaking skills

1. Just a minute!

Another old favourite.

- All sit in a circle.
- Choose one person to be the first speaker. (It helps to have a neutral timer too).
- Give the speaker a topic to talk about (e.g. fruit, school, holidays, football). The speaker's aim is to speak on that subject for 1 minute without hesitating, deviating or repeating themselves.
- The rest of the class are free to challenge by putting their hands up and saying whether the speaker has hesitated, deviated etc.
- If the judge (you!) decide the challenge is fair the speaker and the challenger swap places and the challenger has to try to keep talking until the minute is up.

Variation: Split the class into teams and make it a competition for points.

2. Voice warm up

- All sit in a circle.
- Give a simple statement such as 'I like walking in summer' or 'Collecting all of the Pokemon cards is difficult'.
- Get everybody to repeat the statement a number of times (all at once).
- Now ask them to say it different ways, for example as if:
 - You are talking to a toddler
 - You are shouting across the playground
 - You are bored of saying it so many times
 - You are coming around after an operation

Cool down games

1. Guard the keys

- All sit in a circle
- Choose one person to sit in middle of circle, blindfolded, with keys placed close to them. Select others to creep up on the guard and try to steal the keys without being heard (you might need to set rules like they must go round the outside of the circle first). If the guard points at the thief, they must sit down and someone else should try. If a thief is successful, they change places with the guard.

2. Chinese Mime

- A variation of Chinese whispers!
- All sit in a circle
- Choose a pupil to begin the mime. They should choose a short mime of a simple action, such as making a cup of tea or cleaning their teeth.
- Everybody sits with their eyes closed (it helps if they are facing outwards to avoid the temptation of peeking!). The first person taps the person on their right and shows them the mime, once. The second person taps the person to their right and shows them the mime. Once they have shown their mime they should close their eyes again!
- Continue around the circle until the mime has reached the last person, seated to the left of the first person. They show the final mime to the whole class, followed by the first person who shows the original mime.

3. Pass the pencil!

- All sit in a tight circle
- Send one person out of the room to be the detective and give a pupil in the circle the pencil.
- The detective comes back in and stands in the middle of the circle. The pencil should be passed around the circle without the detective seeing it. The detective has three goes at guessing who has the pencil.

Variation: Make it easier with a smaller object or a tighter circle! Make it harder with a larger object / circle.