

Drama Warm Ups and Circle Games

These are all games which I use. I made the list for an inset session at my school, using Drama Club members to demonstrate in their after school session so staff could watch. I thought other people might find them useful too.

Circle Games

The Wind Blows

This is a good game for mixing up cliques and a variation of fruit bowl which you already know. Put chairs in a circle. Turn one chair to face out. Choose someone to stand in the middle. They (or you) can call:

The wind blows for ..
 everyone wearing a watch
 everyone who supports Arsenal
 everyone who can swim a length
 everyone who had breakfast today
 everyone who likes ice cream etc

If the statement applies to a pupil, they must get up and change places. The caller finds a seat. The last pupil left standing, becomes the new caller. No one can change places with the person sitting next to them.

Fruit Bowl

As above but every one is a fruit e.g. apple, pear, banana. When you call that fruit, the person standing tries to find a seat. Call Fruit Bowl for all to change.

Catch a Story

Have a ball or (better) a beanbag. Begin a story. Throw it to the person who must continue the story. This is better than dragging around the circle and shy people can get rid of the story after only one word.

A variation on this is fortunately, unfortunately . Each person must add a sentence, changing the sentence of the main character. E.g.

Unfortunately the plane's engines failed.
 Fortunately the pilot had a parachute.
 Unfortunately the parachute would not open.
 Fortunately there was a haystack underneath. Etc.

Storm

Pupils build up a storm by joining in teacher led sound effects one by one. It builds to a crescendo and dies down to silence.

It was still and quiet.

A gentle breeze was heard. (Teacher rubs hands together. children to her right gradually join in.)

The breeze grew louder. (*Rub more vigorously*)
 A patter of rain was heard. (*tap hands on palms*)
 It began to thunder. (*Stamp feet*)

This is reversed, dropping one noise at a time until all is quiet.

Zoom Eek

A Zoom (car) is passed around the circle. Anyone can stop it and reverse it by shouting EEK! It must then change direction. No one can say EEK more than once. If you are feeling very strong, you can send two cars in opposite directions but that takes a lot of concentration.

Change the Action

The pupils must copy your PREVIOUS action every time you shout change, so:
 Teacher claps hands. Pupils sit still. Teacher shouts CHANGE and begins to pat her knees. Pupils begin to clap their hands.
 Teacher shouts CHANGE again and begins to click her fingers. Pupils now pat their knees.
 This is a good concentration builder.

Master Master, Who Am I?

You need a blindfold for this one. Blindfold a volunteer. A pupil selected by you must approach them quietly, disguise their voice and ask Master Master, Who Am I? If the volunteer guesses correctly, they get another go. If they are wrong, the successful voice gets a turn.

Steal a Slave

Have pupils in pairs, one on a chair, the other standing behind. Pupil on the chair MUST sit with their back touching the back of the chair. Pupil behind, MUST keep their hands behind their backs. The seated pupil is the slave. The standing pupil is the master. On chair is empty (yours if there s an even number). This master has no slave. To get one, they must wink at someone else s slave who will attempt to sneak away from their old master. Masters stop slaves from leaving by tapping their slaves on the shoulder .NOT GRABBING THEM! The newly deprived master must now capture a slave.

Quick Change Artist

Have everyone sit in a circle and choose one person to be the quick change artist. Have the artist go out of sight and change something on him/her self that is visible(i.e.-put shorts on backwards, change hair, tie/untie shoes...). When the artist is done, have him/her walk into the middle of the circle and turn around slowly to give everyone a chance to see what has been changed. Then go around the circle having each person guess what has been changed. The first person to guess correctly is the next artist.

Someone Moved

Have all players sit in a circle and then choose a person to be it. The it is to leave so that it cannot see or hear. Have one to four players move in the circle. When it returns he is to figure out who has moved in the circle

Stations

Everyone sits in a circle and is given a destination (name of a town) and in the middle, the station master stands with all the destination names on a card. He/She then chooses certain names; for example Bradford/Leeds. The two corresponding people then have to get up and exchange seats. In the meantime the station master has to try to jump into one of these seats. More than two destinations can be called out and then ultimately, All Change .

The Ministers Cat

This is an alphabetical word game.

Everyone gets in a circle and claps hands to the beat.

Start with **A**.

Example:

"The ministers cat is an **Angry** Cat", "the ministers cat is a **Black** cat" etc etc.

Hula Hoop

Everyone stands in a circle holding hands. Have two people break hands and put their hands through a hula hoop and rejoin hands again. The hoop must be passed the whole way around the circle without breaking hands. Sometimes it goes over and sometimes under...doesn't matter. It is also fun to time the first try without telling the kids. Tell them at the end after discussing what helped and what made it difficult. Then try to "beat" the first "time".

Chief Ape

Have all players sit in a circle and then choose a person to be it. The it is to leave so that it cannot see or hear. Choose one person to be the chief and he will act out short movements. Examples are clapping hands three times, stomping feet 4 times, etc. All other players must do what the Chief does. Have it return to the group to figure out who is the Big Chief, you can give him up to three guesses if there is a large group.

Wink Murder

This is similar but the murderer kills other pupils by winking at them. The detective must spot the murderer before there is a massacre. They link this if you specify a gruesome method of murder for them to act out.

I m Going Hunting

You play this game in a circle and your memory counts. One person in the circle will start the game off by saying, I m going hunting and I m taking an arrow. The next person will have to repeat what the person next to him said and then add something new from the next letter in the alphabet. I m going hunting and I m taking an arrow and a bow. You keep this going around the circle until one person cannot remember what he is taking. That person is out and you see if the next person can complete the phrase. You don t necessarily have to choose something that you would normally take hunting-it can be funny. You can also modify this game to a specific topic. This is a variation of My Aunt Maud Went hopping.

Cross The Circle

Everyone is numbered around the circle as 1,2,3. hen you call their number, everyone must cross the circle in role as ..a ballerina ..a panther a moonwalker ..someone who s stuck in the mud ..a fashion model whatever you can think of.

Cross Differently

Name a child to cross the circle to an empty chair in any way they like walk commando crawl hop .twirl whatever. They call someone else who must cross in a **different** way.

Energetic Games

The Line Game:

Divide the pupils into equal groups. You will announce an order that you wish them to line up in, first group to do it and sit in a line on the floor wins a point. Use any of these categories: ages (oldest in the front - youngest in the back), alphabetically, shoe size, birthdays, telephone numbers, Mother's first name, etc.

Stick in the Mud

A basic tag game. If pupils are tagged, they must stand with their legs apart (stuck in the mud) until someone crawls through and releases them.

Tea Pot Tag

Work in pairs to make a teapot (as in I m a Little Teapot).

Have one chaser and one chased. The teapots stand still. If the chased wants to escape, they link onto the handle of a teapot. The spout immediately becomes the chased, the handle turns into the spout. Watch out for boys only releasing

Led By The Nose

Pupils must imagine that strings are attached to various parts of their bodies. Move a round the room led by that part e.g. right thumb, nose, knees. Eyelashes etc.

Pip, Squeak Wilfred

Everyone stands in a circle. You call them in turn, Pip, Squeak, Wilfred. You call e.g.

Squeak, all the Squeaks step outside the circle and walk clockwise around it. When you call Home, all the Squeaks must run IN THE SAME DIRECTION back to their original place. Last one back is out and must sit down in their place. CARE! Everyone standing, must stand still not swinging their legs out. Everyone sitting must sit up and not lean back on their hands or they'll get trodden on.

Shazam

This is like Scissors, Paper Stone but played by a whole group. You divide the class into two. I usually play this after a partner activity and send the As one way and the Bs another. The group must secretly decide whether they are Knights, Giants or Wizards.

Knight beats Wizard

Giant beats Knight

Wizard beats Giant

The group confer secretly and come forward to face the other group. You count one two three and the groups simultaneously make the appropriate noise and action.

The wizards brandish an imaginary wand and shout Shazam!

The giants stamp their feet and say Fee, fi, foe fum

The knights draw their swords and shout, en garde

It's often a draw. I usually play best of three

Calming DownGuided Mimes

Individual silent mimes, talked through in detail by you. E.g.

Walking the dog

Learning to juggle

At the beach

Riding the big dipper

Magic Chairs

Everyone puts a chair in a space and moves away to the side of the room. The teacher explains what sort of chair it is and the pupils move to it and sit in it appropriately, staying silent and concentrating on their mime.

The chairs might be:

In a restaurant, highchairs, dentists chairs, in a plane etc.

Leaving the Room

Adverb Exit

Pupils must act their way to the door. E.g. If your name begins with A, leave anxiously, B, bossily, C, cheerfully etc.

Alphabet Exit

Line up. Give a topic e.g. food, country etc. Everyone must give noun beginning with the next appropriate letter of the alphabet as they leave the room e.g. Cars Aston Martin, Bentley, Chevie etc.

If you want more games, I recommend:

Playing the Game, Christine Poulter £9.99 0333403851