

FOCUS

The Theatre Lesson Plan Exchange

Educational Objective: The students will demonstrate their ability to focus on a task while performing a short monologue.

Materials Needed: Slips of paper, container,

Hook: Have one person sit in front of the class. Tell everyone else to watch him. Tell everyone that there is no way that he cannot react to you. Whenever the student moves at all. Point to him and say, "see, there's a reaction." Most likely he will react to that so say it again. It may be a subtle smile or a twitch or a raised eyebrow or he may try to sit perfectly still. The important point is that the student will always react in some way to what the teach is saying. Have him returns to his seat.

Step 1: Divide the class into two groups. Have the first group stand in a line facing the rest of the class. You will need to constantly coach them. Tell them "Do nothing." "We'll just watch you." "Just stand there." "Don't do anything but stand." "We'll watch." "Don't look around, don't do anything." When one person laughs or giggles, don't use his name but coach the entire team. "Don't do anything and we will just watch you, do nothing."

Step 2: As soon as it is evident that everyone standing is uncomfortable give them a task like counting the chairs in the room or counting the posters on the walls. Have everyone else observe the difference.

Step 3: Repeat step 1 with the other group. Note that they may want to start counting to avoid the uncomfortableness. Don't let them.

Coach them just like group 1.

Step 4: Repeat step 2 with the other group except give them something different to count.

Step 5: Discuss how the students felt? Did they like doing nothing or counting? Talk about why being focused on a simple task like counting made them feel more comfortable. Explain how it is very rare that people actually do nothing. Sometimes we may see a person that looks as though he is doing nothing but in reality he is probably in deep thought. Even in sleep, when our bodies shut down and do nothing, our mind stay continually active with dreams (everyone has 3-7 dreams every night - they just can't remember them).

Step 6: Give each student a slip of paper. Have them write one simple task that can be done with one or two people (ex. moving boxes, licking envelopes, playing a game, etc.) Collect the slips in a container.

Step 7: Have two students come up at a time. One student will draw a slip from the container and perform the monologue attached) to the other person while they focusing on the task he has drawn. When finished, The person doing the monologue sits down and the other person draws a slip and another person comes up to be the extra. Continue until everyone has gone.

Step 8: Discuss the importance of having something to focus on while performing.