

Worcester's Got Talent

Ten Theater and Music Themed Activities

Suggested Morning Activities:

- **Fake History**

This game allows kids to create their own history for an ordinary object. They will begin by reading the play "Rock! Sword! Firecracker!" and then move on to create their own fake history. This lesson is taken from Doug at freedrama.net.

You Will Need:

- "Rock! Sword! Firecracker!" copied

To Begin:

1. Have students play Rock, Scissors, Paper. Ask them where they think the game came from.
2. Read play "Rock, Sword, Firecracker!" a short comedy about the legend behind the game of Rock, Scissors, Paper.
3. In groups, create ideas for a short play where you make up the history behind something ordinary such as Knock, Knock Jokes.
4. Have students tell about their short play ideas.

- **Making Masks**

Masks are used throughout the world for cultural, historical, and traditional purposes. They generally have two important functions: 1. Provide disguise for the wearer, and 2. Allow the wearer to temporarily assume another identity. Through rituals, masks are often worn to portray the spirit being represented. Masks also serve to enhance storytelling, providing a way for the actors to disappear into their roles. Masks can represent different cultures from different regions of the world;

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they can represent community beliefs, or a specific person in that community. Through this activity, participants will create their own masks and tell a story behind them.

You Will Need:

- Paper plates
- Paint
- Paint brushes
- Scissors
- Markers
- Glue or tape
- Yarn

To Begin:

1. Distribute materials. Kids can use anything (with reason of course!) that they find for their masks.
2. Participants will create their own masks on paper plates.
3. Once they are done, glue yarn at the ends to the sides of the plate so the children can wear their masks
4. Then, participants will share a background story they have created for their mask.

• **Radio Stations**

Through this activity, participants will work in groups to create their own podcast or radio show. This allows kids to work in groups and convey a message they feel is important.

You Will Need:

- Paper
- Pens



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To Begin:

1. Divide into smaller groups.
2. Have each group pick a theme for their radio/podcast. It can be centered around music, the media, subjects they've learned in school, their community, an advice show, or their day so far.
3. Each group should make up their own podcast or radio show with an announcer, sound effects, and the cast of the show.
4. Pass out paper and pencils so they can write down the activities.
5. Try to have your show last at least 5 minutes.
6. When everyone is done, come together to present in front of the rest of the group.

• **Musical Rounds**

Music is an aspect shared among all cultures across the globe. Music is used culturally, religiously, for communication purposes, or just for fun. This activity first briefly teaches how to read music notes on a scale. Participants will then learn the mechanics of a round, practicing one for practice. They will then work together to create their own round from different patterns.

No Materials Needed

To Begin:

1. Split the participants into groups
2. Explain that you will be creating a round by playing a follow-the-leader activity using body percussion and rhythmic patterns. A round is a song or any other musical composition where two or more parts perform the same melody (or rhythm), beginning at different times. Typical songs used in a round are Frere Jaques, or Row, Row, Row Your Boat.
3. Instead of singing this round will be done with rhythm. Begin by playing a version of Simon Says, clapping a 4 beat rhythm pattern and have students echo the pattern. Once children are comfortable echo clapping various 4

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beat rhythm patterns, add other levels of body percussion rhythms including stamp, pat, and snap using one level per 4 beat rhythm.

4. When everyone has gotten the 4 beat rhythm move on to making it a round. The leader continues to clap, pat, snap, or stamp a 4 beat rhythm pattern immediately after the first 4 beat pattern, rather than waiting for the follower to echo. The follower will be echoing the leader's rhythm while at the same time watching and listening for the next rhythm. This performance will create a round.
5. After students have sufficient time to experience the game, ask the students, "What is the definition of a round?" "A round is when one group begins, and once they reach the end of the first line, the second group begins, so on and so forth..."
6. Once they understand the basics, split up into small groups and have each group make up their own pattern (clapping hands, stopping feet, etc.).
7. Once the group has a rhythm, see if they can create a song, that they can teach to the other kids. The song should be short and simple so it can be sung in a round (try to keep it similar to the length of Row, Row, Row Your Boat).
8. When the groups are ready have the groups teach each other the songs. Let the group that invented the song start the round, with the rest of the group following.

• Create a Character

These activities will help children create settings and characters without the fancy props and costumes in staged productions. These two activities will help kids feel more comfortable acting, and will help with the Improv day later on. Because each character and setting is different, this will allow kids to act out the differences to convey their ideas.

No Materials Needed

You Will Need:

- Paper

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- Markers

To Begin:

The setting:

1. Divide the kids into groups. Each group is going to stage a location.
2. Privately, give each group their location. Some possible locations are: haunted house, amusement park ride, library, underwater, family room, or school.
3. Each group must stage their location using five props that they find. They do not have to use any props, but they should not use more than five.
4. Once the groups have come up with their setting, have them come up with a character that could live in that habitat. Have them think of a name, description, personality traits, likes and dislikes, tone of voice, their walk...
5. When the groups are ready (after about 30 minutes) have the groups perform their "skits." The groups can move in ways typical for that setting, and should act out their characters. They should not give away their names or locations (so if they are in space they cannot say "I'm an astronaut and I'm going to space.")
6. Each group performs their location in front of the group. The others have to try and guess the location based on what they see.

Suggested Afternoon Activities:

• **Mad Scripts**

Mad Scripts are a twist on MadLibs. Kids use play scripts written with blanks left so the children can fill in the words and create their own unique stories. Children will fill in the blanks and then act out the plays they come up with.

You Will Need:

- Mad Scripts Sheets

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- Pens

To Begin:

1. Divide the kids into small groups.
2. Hand out the first part of the mad scripts and have groups fill in the blanks.
Don't hand out the scripts until the groups have finished this part!
3. Hand out the script sheets to participants and give them 30 minutes to put together a scene.
4. Once everyone is done, children will act out their plays reading from their finished scripts. Each story should be a little different because of the different blanks.

• **Improvisation Day**

Improvisational theater, also called improv, is a form of theater where all of what is being performed is created at the moment it is performed. The dialogue, actions, story, and characters are all created collaboratively by the participants in present time, without the use of pre-prepared script. The most basic rule of improvisation is that there is no right or wrong. Instead of one specific project, the afternoon should consist of various improv activities. The following is a selection to try from:

No Materials Needed

To Begin:

123 Counting:

1. Divide the group into pairs with one partner as A and the other partner as B. They will take turns counting to three (A says 1, B says 2, A says 3, B says 1, A says 2...). Then tell A to make a sound for 1 that will replace the number. Continue until 2 and 3 are either sounds or movements.
2. Eventually, instead of saying the numbers, participants should be either making sounds or movements

Yes, and...

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1. Divide the group into two even lines facing each other, one line is A, the other is B
2. The first person in line A comes up with an offer for the first person in line B
3. The person in line B must say Yes, and then add to it. The next person in line A must then agree to the addition, and add to it
4. (e.g. A: Would you like to cut my hair for me? B:Yes!I have a hairdressing set in my room, let's do it there. A: Great! I'll bring a picture of what I want it to look like.)
5. When they're finished, each student will go to the end of the opposite line (i.e. The student from line A will go to the end of line B, the line B student will go to the end of line A), and the next two students will have their chance to go.

Come Again?

1. Participants form a circle
2. One student comes up with an open ended question
3. The student next to them will rephrase the question into one more specific
4. That same student will create another open ended question for the student beside them to make more specific
5. Work around the circle until everyone has participated

Bus Stop

1. One person begins, and enters the scene: a bus stop. They are waiting for the bus. Have them create their own character and make it obvious who they are.
2. The next person enters the scene, a completely new character. Have them join the scene as their new character.

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3. A third player, a new character, enters the scene, and interacts with the existing characters. When the third character enters, the first character must create a reason to leave the stop.
4. Continue adding characters until everyone has had a turn.

• I Am Walking

No Materials Needed

This is a great game that allows kids to work together and communicate, while also acting out a scene. Before play, prepare a set of cards, each containing the second half of a sentence. Below are a few examples, but you will think of more. Lesson taken from childdrama.com

"... through a blinding snowstorm, looking for a lost child."

"... across the Great Plains on the way to Oregon."

"... to school on a cool late fall morning."

"... down a dark alley, looking for an escaped prisoner."

"... through the Amazon rainforest, in search of rare species of animals."

"... to the platform to receive a gold medal."

"... down an empty highway, running away from home."

"... along the Boardwalk near the beach on a summer evening."

"... across the deck of a sailing ship during a storm."

(The idea is that the first half of each and every sentence is "I am walking")

1. Divide the class into groups of three or more. The groups will "perform" one at a time.
2. The first group enters the performance space. A representative draws a card from the pile, and they share it around so everyone can see it, but there is NO DISCUSSION.
3. On your cue, the group must create an instant scene (using pantomime, sounds, props, etc., but no words) that will convey the COMPLETE sense of their sentence. This can be done, obviously, in lots of different ways. One

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person might become the person who is "walking," while others become the environment, or "supporting" characters. The challenge comes in the fact that the group is not allowed to discuss or plan.

4. If each individual in the group decides that he would be the best person to be the "lost child," for example, the group will almost certainly fail to communicate the snowstorm. Each member of the group must evaluate what the rest of the group is doing, and respond by contributing in the way that best reinforces the effective communication of the group.
5. Once the group has performed, the other groups should try to guess the sentence. The group who performed should try not to react positively or negatively to the guesses until everyone has guessed. In this way, no one changes or suppresses their guess once they know it is "wrong." This is important, because the "guesses" are the best kind of descriptive feedback on the effectiveness of the performance.
6. Repeat the game until all groups have had a turn to perform.

• **Making Instruments**

Musical instruments can be used in song and communication. Through this activity, participants will make their own musical instruments and experiment with making different sounds. There are different suggestions, but feel free to improvise and make your own instruments.

You Will Need:

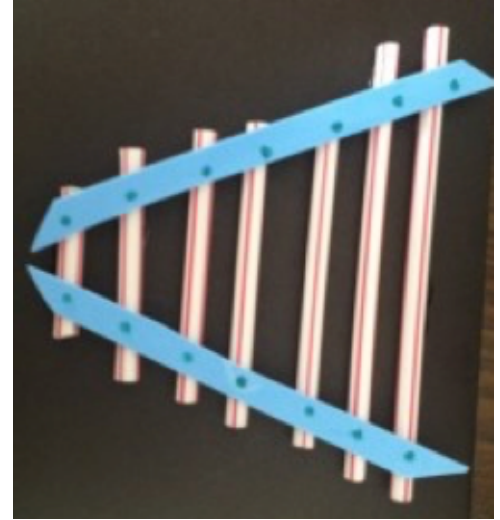
- Paper plates
- Glue
- Straws
- Balloons
- Cups
- Scissors
- Yarn

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To Begin:

Straw Xylophone:

1. Materials: straws, scissors, and glue
2. Choose two straws as the base, and lay them at an angle so they are closer to each other at one end
3. Using 4 to 6 straws, carefully cut them so they are different sizes
4. Glue the straws to the base straws with the longer straws at the top



Drums

1. Materials: cups and balloons
2. Carefully stretch a balloon over the top of a cup

Paper Cymbals

1. Materials: paper plates, glue, yarn, and scissors
2. Cut two pieces of yarn about 3-4 inches
3. Glue the ends of the yarn to the backs of two paper plates
4. Holding the plates either by the yarn or with hands under the yarn, you have cymbals



• **Story Chain**

This activity will encourage participants to be creative and quick thinking. The object of this activity is to create a story using sentences each child creates. Make sure someone is recording the sentences you say so you can use it for a skit later on.

You Will Need:

- Paper

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- Pen to record story

To Begin:

1. Have everyone sit in a circle.
2. Choose one person to start the story. They say a sentence to begin. Try to give the story a introduction, problem, and some sort of resolution. You may want to try a few rounds before choosing a story to write down.
3. The story continues around the circle with each child adding a sentence until the story is complete. As you go along have someone record the sentences, or pass around a paper so each person can record what they said.
4. Once the story is complete, choose participants to act out the short play.
5. Once they understand the play, incorporate sound effects, props, or musical instruments. Try to add as many details as possible!