

# EXPLORE



## **Texas 4-H Theater & Performance Arts** *Theater & Performance Arts: Act I*



[texas4-h.tamu.edu](http://texas4-h.tamu.edu)

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.



# EXPLORE

## TEXAS 4-H THEATER & PERFORMANCE ARTS



### Description

The Texas 4-H Explore series allows 4-H volunteers, educators, members, and youth who may be interested in learning more about 4-H to try some fun and hands-on learning experiences in a particular project or activity area. Each guide features information about important aspects of the 4-H program, and its goal of teaching young people life skills through hands-on experiences. Additionally, each guide contains at least six learning experiences, which can be used as a project guide, or as activities for six different 4-H meetings.

With a network of more than 6 million youth, 600,000 volunteers, 3,500 professionals, and more than 25 million alumni, 4-H helps shape youth to move our country and the world forward in ways that no other youth organization can.

### Texas 4-H

Texas 4-H is like a club for kids and teens ages 5-18, and it's BIG! It's the largest youth development program in Texas with more than 550,000 youth involved each year. No matter where you live or what you like to do, Texas 4-H has something that lets you be a better you!

You may think 4-H is only for your friends with animals, but it's so much more! You can do activities like shooting sports, food science, healthy living, robotics, fashion, and photography.

Look for 4-H clubs at your school, an after-school program, a community center, or even on a military base or through the reserves for military families.

Texas 4-H is part of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas A&M System. Founded in 1908, 4-H is the largest youth development program in Texas, reaching more than 550,000 youth each year.

### The 4-H Motto and Pledge

"To Make the Best Better!"

I pledge: My HEAD to clearer thinking, My HEART to greater loyalty, My HANDS to larger service and My HEALTH to better living, For my Club, my Community, my Country, and my world.

### Participating in 4-H

4-H is a great program because it provides options for young people to participate. From a 4-H club located in your community, a SPIN club that focuses on one particular project area, or participating in 4-H through your classroom at school, 4-H allows youth to learn in many different environments. If you are interested in joining 4-H, contact your County Extension Office and ask for a list of the 4-H clubs in your area. If you are a school teacher/educator and would like to use 4-H curriculum or these project guides in your classroom, contact your Extension Office as well for assistance.

### Purpose

Texas 4-H is designed to develop the youth of our state into productive adult citizens. The 4-H Program uses a non-formal educational process of engaging youth in a "learning by doing" process. This includes hands-on opportunities, participation in workshops and clinics conducted by volunteer leaders or professionals, as well as competitive experiences which allow 4-H members to demonstrate the knowledge they have gained. Through this entire process, the youth are learning key life skills such as working with others, teamwork, cooperation, and goal setting. Through all experiences, youth get to interact with adult volunteers and county Extension agents.

### What is 4-H?

4-H members across the nation are responding to challenges every day in their communities and their world.

As the youth development program of the Cooperative Extension System of land-grant universities, 4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization, empowering six million young people throughout the United States. Cooperative Extension of 1862 and 1890 land-grant universities provide leadership to engage young people in 4-H in all 3,007 counties of the United States. The impact of the Cooperative Extension partnership is profound, bringing together National Institute of Food and Agriculture of USDA, land grant universities and county government to resource learning opportunities for youth.

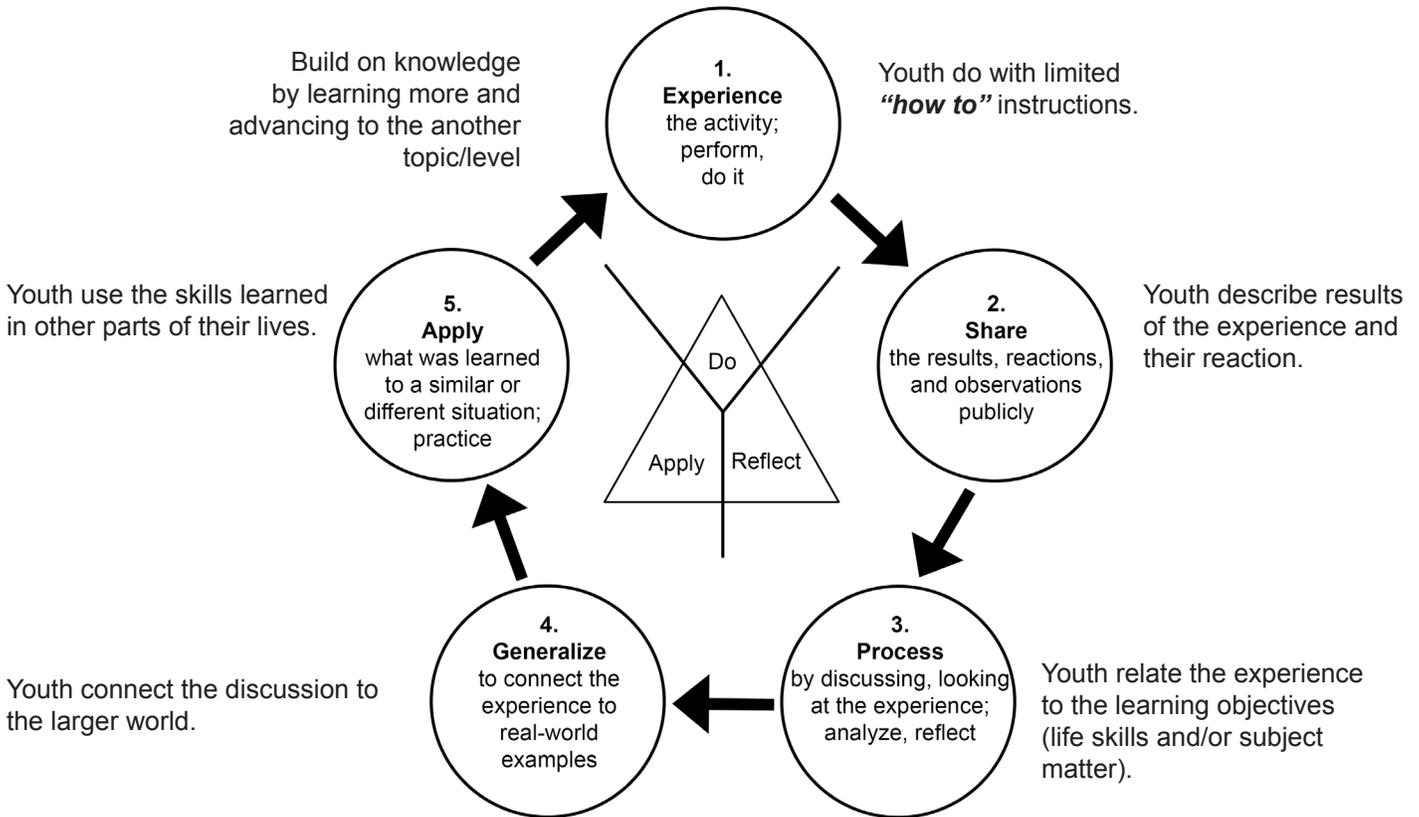
Through America's 110 land-grant universities and its Cooperative Extension System, 4-H reaches every corner of our nation—from urban neighborhoods to suburban schoolyards to rural farming communities.



## 4-H “Learning by Doing” Learning Approach

The Do, Reflect, Apply learning approach allows youth to experience the learning process with minimal guidance from adults. This allows for discovery by youth that may not take place with exact instructions.

### EXPLORE THE CONTENT Introduction of the topic, overview and exploration of content, and review of objectives



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# 4-H THEATER & PERFORMANCE ARTS *Lessons*



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**EXPLORE**  
Theater & Arts

# Imagination



## EXPLORE THE CONTENT:

Lesson one contains activities that help participants explore their imagination. Imagination can include all the senses. Imagination can allow you to travel anywhere in the world and beyond! You can do and be anything you want. Imagination strengthens creative abilities. Imagination and pretending are considered a child’s profession, but as the child matures and the real world sets in, imagination starts to dwindle. This lesson is to prime the pump of imagination and start the creative juices flowing. Theatre is all about imagination so let the creativity begin!

## DO:

### Activity #1: Guided Imagery (The Trip)

(adapted from Matt Buchanan at Chiddrama.com)

Use the following narrative or make up one of your own to explore imagination, focus senses, and create environment.

Pause whenever necessary to allow the thinking and feeling called for to take place. (Narrative may be lengthened or shortened according to age of group.)

For this exercise you must find your own comfortable space. I will be telling a story in which the main character is you.

### Explain:

As you listen to the story, you must imagine that it is actually happening to you. You should concentrate especially on your five senses—your sense of touch, smell, taste, sight and hearing. You will not be actually moving around or “acting out” the story—this isn’t that kind of exercise. Instead, you will be using your senses in your imagination to EXPERIENCE the story.

It will be extremely important as our story unfolds that you DO NOT MAKE ANY SOUNDS. Other participants will be trying very hard to listen to the sounds in their imaginations, and real sounds will make that very difficult. Similarly, of course, you must not move around or touch anyone else in the room. Concentrate on your senses in your imagination.

To begin our story, I want you to think of a place that is just yours. It might be your room, or if you share a room, your special part of the room. Or, it might be a tree fort or a special place outside. You will decide what the place is, but it should be a place that is private and special to you.

## TIME:

45 to 60 minutes

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Aluminum foil in varying lengths
- Numerous objects that can be held in your hand
- Pillows or chairs for seating

## OBJECTIVES:

The 4-H member will:

- Explore imagination
- Practice thinking about the five senses and their role in theater and performance arts
- Begin developing characters



Imagine that you are in your special place now. Look around. Look CAREFULLY. Use your sense of sight to take in all of the details you can, even the ones you may never have noticed before. Maybe there are little cracks in the ceiling, if there is a ceiling. Maybe there are colors or textures you've never noticed before. It's amazing how many things we see every day but never really SEE. Now listen. Listen to all the sounds in your special place. Even a very quiet place has lots of sounds if you really listen. Maybe there is the sound of your house shifting. Maybe there is traffic in the distance. You must listen for the special sounds of YOUR place. And smells. Nearly everything in the world has its own smell. Maybe you've never noticed the smells of your special place, but I'll bet they feel comfortable and safe. See if you can identify several smells. Wood has a smell. Earth has a smell. Your place probably smells like you, too. Really breathe in the smells of your special place. The air may even have a taste—see if it does. Now take your hand and touch various things in your space. Feel the textures and temperatures of your space. Are the surfaces rough or smooth? Warm or cool? Damp or dry? Really explore your space with your sense of touch.

Now, as you sit in your special place, I want you to think of a trip you would like to take. Think of someplace else you might like to go. It might be someplace very close by or someplace halfway around the world. You must choose for yourself. As you sit in your space, go over in your mind how you would travel to get to this other place. For some of you, the whole trip could be made on foot. Some of you will realize you'd have to take a car, and some probably even a plane or a boat. Some of you might need a spaceship. But I want you to carefully think of all the steps your travel would take. For instance, if you would have to take a plane, you would first have to get in a car or a taxi, then drive to the airport, etc. Think of ALL the steps.

We've decided to take the trip. It is time to pack our bags. Since only you know where you're going and how long you'll be gone, only you know what you will need to pack. So get out a suitcase or bag—whatever seems appropriate—and begin to pack. As you place each item in the suitcase or bag, examine it carefully with your five senses. What color is it? Does it have a smell? Is it heavy or light? If you shake it, does it make a sound? Does it have a texture? We're going to take the time to really pack carefully.

Now as we begin our actual trip, you may find you have to speed up or slow down time in order to keep up with the story. If your trip is very short, you may have to slow down time, but most of us will probably have to speed up time.

Imagine you are now on the first leg of your journey. It will be different for each of you. But as you travel along, use your five senses. What are the sights you see? The sounds you hear? The smells you smell? What physical sensations are there? Are there any taste sensations? Really EXPERIENCE this part of the journey.

Okay, now here's where some of you may need to speed up or slow down time. Imagining you are exactly half way to your destination. Many of you are probably in a different kind of transport now, though some of you may be in the same one. Once again, use your five senses. What do you see? Hear? Taste? Smell? Feel?

Now let's imagine we have arrived just outside our destination. That may mean different things for each of you. If your destination has a gate, or is indoors and behind a door, imagine you are just outside the door or gate. If your destination is just a general place—say, the desert—imagine you are in some sort of transport, about to step out and "into" the place. In any case, before you enter your destination, stop and use your senses again. From outside, what does the place look like? Sound like? Smell like? What do you think it will feel like inside?

Okay, it's finally time to enter. Once inside, I don't know what you're going to do—I don't even know where you are. But, take some time just to experience this new place and remember to carefully consider what your five senses are telling you. There will probably be lots of new sights, sounds, sensations, smells, and tastes to experience.

As you do whatever it is you came here to do, I want you to think for a minute. Who is the VERY LAST person you would ever expect to meet in this place? The MOST UNLIKELY person to ever be here? In your mind's eye, recall what



this person looks like, sounds like, etc.

Suddenly you look up, and there that person is! You are certainly surprised to see him or her, but I don't know whether it's a good surprise or a bad surprise. I don't know who it is or how you feel about him or her. It may be someone you are glad to see or someone you wish would go away. As you look at the person, and try to see as many details as you can, he or she speaks. Listen to the voice. What does it sound like? What is the person saying?

I don't know if you speak back, or if you do, what you say. I don't know what, if anything, the two of you do. This part of the story is up to you.

Finally the person leaves. I don't know why, but you do. I don't know whether you caused them to leave, but you do. I don't know whether you're glad or sad to see them go. But at any rate, now that they're gone, you realize it's time for you to go, too. As you leave the place, take one last look. Try to remember all of the sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touch sensations you can for your trip home.

We're going to compress time again, and imagine we're halfway home. What sights do you see? What smells do you smell? What sounds do you hear? What tastes do you taste? What sensations do you feel?

Something has gone wrong. I don't know what it is—that's up to you, but something pretty serious. I don't know if the problem is something you can see or not. Maybe the problem has a sound associated with it. Maybe there is a smell. You can probably feel something as well. Whatever the problem is, no one seems to know what to do about it.

Finally you are able to solve the problem. I don't know how you did it. Does your solution have any sounds or smells associated with it? What do you see and feel? At any rate, you certainly feel relief, as we once again speed up or slow down time to arrive just outside our special place—home.

Before you go inside, see how many details of your special place you can recall. Then, when you go in, you will see how many of them you remembered correctly. It's been a long day, and a long trip, and you are tired. So you go into your special place and sleep.

(Once the story is finished, have the members do some stretching exercises to get the blood flowing again.)

Discussion Options: Have several participants describe their adventure. Discuss how even though the same story was read to everyone; youth came up with totally different adventures. Their own imagination was responsible for their personal story. (Point out that this is one of the processes writers use to come up with books, plays, etc.).

Discuss how effectively members were able to use their five senses in their imaginary adventure.

#### **REFLECT:**

- How did you come up with your "special place?"
- Could you imagine the smells, sounds, touch etc.?
- How were you able to solve the problems you encountered?
- How did it make you feel? Was it a pleasant experience - why or why not?
- Why was it a different experience for each member?
- Could you go there again and have a different experience?
- How was it possible to go there without really going there?



**Activity #2: Complete the Story**

In this activity, one of the group (or the leader) starts a story and then the next person adds to it and so on until the story is complete. There are several variations of this activity:

- The members can only say one word
- The members can only say one sentence
- The members can continue on with the story until the leader rings a bell or blows a whistle.

To expand this activity, while one person is telling part of the story, the person next to him (or whoever you want to choose) acts out that part of the story. (Since each person knows he must be the actor as well as the narrator, hopefully he will not include difficult or embarrassing details when he is the narrator.)

**REFLECT:**

- Was this easy or difficult? Why?
- Was it easier to add just one word or an entire phrase?
- Did the story end like you thought it would?
- Would you rather start the story, fill in the middle, or end the story?

**Activity #3: Creating Characters/Props**

Tell the members they are going to create characters and/or props and use them in a story.

Hand out a variety of lengths of aluminum foil. Have them design whatever they would like – people, animals, etc., then create and act out a story using their props.

Variations: Members can work independently or in groups, story can be improvised on the spot or written out. Time may be given to create a scene with the various characters and props and then present the scene to the rest of the group.

**REFLECT:**

Activity #3: Creating Characters/Props

- How did you decide what to create?
- What obstacles did you encounter?
- Did you prefer working individually or with a group?
- How did you decide on a story line?
- Did you make up the story to match your creation or make your creation to match your story?

**APPLY:**

- When would it be enjoyable to remember or imagine a special place?
- Are there times when listening quietly is appropriate? Give some examples.
- When would being able to work in a group be necessary?
- When would be a time that listening to other's ideas is necessary?
- Can you use your imagination to create anything you can think of?
- When would that be helpful?
- When would developing problem solving skills be necessary?
- How might imagination assist you in solving a problem?

**REFERENCES:**



- Reprinted with special permission by authors of:
- Discover: 4-H Theatre Arts Clubs, Utah State University Extension, February 2014
- Matt Buchanan, <http://www.childdrama.com>
- Ruth Ann Vokac, 2003 Play the Role, National 4-H Curriculum

# Body Language and Voice



## EXPLORE THE CONTENT:

Lesson two contains activities to help participants understand the importance of using the body and voice to portray a variety of characters and situations necessary in a theatre production.

## KEY TERMS

- Diction: The distinctiveness of speech, or the way a person speaks so that each word is distinctly clear and understandable.
- Tone: Shows the attitude of the writer toward the subject and the audience.
- Projection: Ability to make your voice heard.

## DO:

### Warmup Activities

*(All warm-ups and activities may be adapted according to time restraints and age of participants.)*

Theatre involves working with others as a team. Even if you are presenting a monologue, the audience is part of your team and requires a connection. This warm-up activity requires working together, communicating, and completing a task as a team.

### Warmup #1: Magic Carpet

*adapted from R.A. Vovak, 2003*

Lay out large pieces of fabric such as inexpensive plastic table cloths or tarps. They should be large enough so that six to ten participants can stand on them comfortably, but not so large that there is a lot of room left over.

Ask participants to step onto the fabric for a magic carpet ride. But tell them that on this carpet, passengers must stand. Tell them to imagine that the carpet is about to move. They need to adjust their feet to balance themselves. Wait a few seconds and ask if anyone feels movement.

Then announce, "Oops, I've made a mistake. The carpet has the wrong side up!

The object is to turn the "carpet" over without anyone stepping off.

### Variation:

*Adapted from Family Fun Boredom Busters, 2002, Family Fun Magazine, edited by Deanna F Cook.*

Instead of a "magic carpet" you could be on a shrinking island. Everyone is on the tarp, then the island starts to shrink, and

## TIME:

60 to 90 minutes

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 Plastic table cloth or tarp approximately 52" square for every six participants

## OBJECTIVES:

The 4-H member will:

- Define the following key terms: diction, tone, and projection.
- Demonstrate and practice how body language can convey different meanings.
- Demonstrate and practice how voice tone, pitch, and volume can convey different meanings.



everyone has to get off (the tarp is folded in half). Everyone gets back on – the island starts to shrink again (everyone gets off and the tarp is folded again). The object is to see how small you can fold the tarp and have everyone still be able to stay on the “island.” (This requires thinking out of the box – some members could be on other’s shoulders, stand on tippy toes, etc.)

Once members become comfortable working with others, you are ready to move on to specific activities relevant to the theater.

### **Activity #1: Moving Your Body - Pinocchio**

Have participants mimic the actions as Pinocchio comes to life! (created by Matt Buchanan at [www.Childdrama.com](http://www.Childdrama.com))

Tell the following story:

*Right now you’re made completely of wood. Your arms and legs are carved from a single piece of wood. You can’t move any part of yourself at all.*

*Now the magic spell has begun. It begins at the top of your head. The spell moves down slowly until your head down to your eyebrows is flesh and blood. Try and move your eyebrows.*

*The spell keeps moving down. Now you can move your eyes! All your life you’ve been staring straight ahead, and now you can look to the sides.*

*The spell gets to your ears and your nose. See if you can wiggle them.*

*The spell gets to your mouth. You can smile. It feels strange at first, and probably looks pretty strange too, but you grow more comfortable with it. Try some other facial expressions as well.*

*Slowly you discover that you can turn your head. Careful! You can look up and down carefully as well. Look! You have feet! This is the first time you were ever sure.*

*The spell reaches your shoulders. But remember, your arms and hands are still attached to your torso, since you are carved from a single piece of wood, so you can move ONLY your shoulders. Try some circles. Do you feel a tingle up and down your spine? That’s the magic working.*

*The spell reaches your chest. You can puff it out like a soldier.*

*Your elbows can move now, but still not your hands. As the spell goes lower, see if you can pull your left hand away from your body. Ooofff! You did it.*

*Bring your hand up to your face and study it. See if you can move the fingers. Wow! You’ve never seen anything so beautiful!*

*See if you can get your right hand free as well. Does it move too?*

*The spell has reached your waist. Carefully bend forward, to the side. See if you bend backwards. See if you can make a circle.*

*The spell reaches your hips, but your knees are still locked together and your feet are still attached to your pedestal. The spell gets to your knees. See if they bend!*

*Reach down and see if you can pull your left foot free. Ooofff! Point the toe. Flex the foot. Make little circles.*



*Now see if you can get your right foot free.*

*You're all real now! See how you can move. Careful at first--these are your first steps! Let's find all the ways our new bodies move!*

### **Activity 2: Body Language – Actions Speak Louder than Words**

Participants are lined up in a straight line. On your signal, they are to move their bodies according to the descriptions you give them. Then at your signal, change the description. This can be done all together, in teams, individually, etc. Always encourage the members not participating in the action to applaud the ones acting.)

Actions may include:

- Walking through heavy snow
- Walking on hot coals
- Being very angry
- Walking through the desert being hot, tired
- Sneaking up on someone or something
- Pulling a heavy load

### **Activity 3: Facial Expressions – Emotions**

Make your face show emotion or thought

*ideas from R. A. Vokac, 2003*

In groups of two, practice showing these emotions or thoughts without speaking and by moving only face/head/neck muscles:

- Happiness
- Sadness
- Boredom
- Anger
- Surprise
- Excitement
- Disgust
- Disappointment
- You can't do that
- It can't be that late
- How tall are you
- What a dumb idea
- Watch out for that car!
- That hurt
- That cake looks delicious
- What a disgusting sight
- You're making too much noise

Now make your whole body show emotions or thoughts:

- Happiness
- Sadness
- Boredom
- Anger
- Surprise
- Excitement
- Disgust
- Disappointment



- Puzzled over a strange sound
- Cold as you are watching a football game
- Tired after pulling weeds
- Hungry as you wait for food to be brought
- Sleepy as you try to listen in school
- Hot as you stand in the sun
- Peaceful as you look at the sky

**Variations:** Choose teams, have them compete to guess which emotion / thought the other team is portraying. Have everyone in a circle, and have each member draw a card with an emotion or thought written on the card, have members act them out one at a time and have others guess what it is.

Always remember to applaud the efforts of others!

#### **Activity 4: Using Your Voice - Mary Had a Little Lamb**

Now let's add the voice. Discuss the importance of diction, tone, and projection. Have members practice saying "Mary Had a Little Lamb" in the following styles: (have members draw out of a hat, be assigned etc.). You could read the style before the member performs or keep it a secret and have other participants guess the style being performed.

- Very sad
- To a small child
- A long way away
- In a hurry
- To a lip reader
- As a secret
- Angrily
- Freezing cold
- Being afraid

#### **Additional Option: "Hello"**

Have members practice saying "hello" in the following styles: (May repeat the word "hello" as many times as needed)

- Shyly
- Greeting someone you would rather not see
- Answering the phone when no one is there
- Looking for someone you can't find
- Telling someone that something he/she just said is sort of dumb
- Boomingly
- Answering the telephone
- Trying to get someone to open a door
- Flirtingly
- Greeting someone you haven't seen for a long time

#### **Additional activity: Using Voice to Convey Meaning:**

Hand out the following phrases and have members come up with a variety of ways to say the phrase to convey different meanings. Try to come up with at least three variations.

- You did that
- I'll be back
- Are you going to wear that shirt
- Wow, what a day



- Stay with me
- She/he is not my girl/boy friend
- Where are you going
- Are you going to eat that

### What Are You Doing? Putting It All Together

*Idea from Matt Buchanan at [www.Childdrama.com](http://www.Childdrama.com)*

Group gets in a line at the edge of the playing space. The first person enters the space and begins to pantomime a simple activity—for example, brushing teeth.

The second person runs on and says, “What are you doing?”

The first person may answer anything EXCEPT what he is actually doing. In our example he might say, “I’m washing the car.”

The moment the second person hears the answer, she must begin to pantomime the mentioned activity.

The first person goes to the end of the line and the third person runs on and says, “What are you doing?”  
Etc.

#### *Pointers for “What Are You Doing?”*

The person acting MUST NOT STOP until he or she has answered the question. (Side coach to make sure.)

The new person MUST START IMMEDIATELY when the answer is heard.

The answer MUST NOT be what the person is doing, but, for convenience, it should also NOT be something that LOOKS LIKE what the person is actually doing.

#### **Variations for older members:**

After a while, add to the original formula, “I’m \_\_\_\_\_.” It can become, “I’m \_\_\_\_\_ with a \_\_\_\_\_.” Eventually it can become, “I’m \_\_\_\_\_ with a \_\_\_\_\_ while \_\_\_\_\_.” (For example, “I’m painting the barn with a codfish while snorkeling.” It doesn’t have to make sense.) The second person must begin to act as soon as she hears even PART of the answer. (In the example, we should see her painting the barn even before she hears that she’s using a codfish. When she hears about the snorkeling she’ll have to adjust.) Side coach to make sure they get all three details into their pantomiming.

You can play this as a tournament if you want. Two people bounce the question back and forth until one of them “fouls” by repeating himself, stopping the action before answering the question, not starting the acting in time, or answering the truth. A new challenger steps in, and so on until all but one person has been eliminated.

### **REFLECT:**

- Be aware of how your body position and movement is involved in communicating your verbal message to others. Is your body sending the same message as your words?
- Can you change your body to make your message clearer?
- When talking with someone, notice their body language. Are you able to understand their message more clearly by watching their body movement?
- How does the pitch and volume of your voice affect the message you’re communicating?





## **APPLY:**

- How does on-stage body language differ from body language used in daily interactions?
- How does body language affect your daily conversations?
- Does your body language appropriately demonstrate what you would like to share? Does it need to be adjusted to better demonstrate your emotions?
- How does your voice (pitch, tone, and volume) affect your daily conversations?

## **REFERENCES:**

- Reprinted with special permission by authors of: Discover: 4-H Theatre Arts Clubs, Utah State University Extension, February 2014
- Matt Buchanan, <http://www.childdrama.com>
- Ruth Ann Vokac, 2003 Play the Role, National 4-H Curriculum
- Sharon Abreu, 2006. <http://www.penguinsonthinice.com/Voice%20Projection%20Tips.pdf>



# Theater Dynamics



## EXPLORE THE CONTENT:

Lesson three contains activities to help participants understand the meaning of drama, characters, plot, setting, conflict, climax, and resolution and how they are used in theatre.

## KEY TERMS

- **Drama:** Drama refers to the specific mode of fiction represented in performance. It comes from a Greek word meaning “action” which is derived from “to do” or “to act.” Drama is a composition, especially one telling a serious story, that is intended for representation by actors impersonating the characters and performing the dialogue and action.
- **Characters:** The actors in the drama can be people, animals, objects, etc. Can be real or animated.
- **Plot:** The story line of the play or theatrical production. What the play is about.
- **Setting:** Where the story is taking place.
- **Conflict:** Conflict is the struggle between the characters, between the characters and something else or it could also be a struggle within the character.
- **Climax:** Climax is the high point of the theatre performance. The story line builds up in excitement to a point where the excitement is intense.
- **Resolution:** The resolution is when the conflict is solved and the story is winding down. It is the “and they all lived happily ever after” of the story.

## TIME:

60 to 90 minutes

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Shoe or any other object to pass around (several needed if variation is used)
- A hat or box
- Slips of paper with “characters,” “setting,” “conflict,” and “resolution” written on them

## OBJECTIVES:

The 4-H member will:

- Define the following key terms: drama, characters, plot, setting, conflict, climax, resolution
- Practice identifying and acting out the plot, conflict, climax and resolution.
- Practice teamwork

## DO:

**Warmup Activities** (May be adapted according to time restraints and age of participants.)

### Warmup #1: Dude

*adapted from Matt Buchanan at [www.childdrama.com](http://www.childdrama.com)*

Stand in a circle with everyone looking at the floor.

When the leader calls “Look up,” everyone must look directly into the face of someone else in the circle. Most people will find they are looking at someone who is not looking back at them, but a few people will probably find they are staring directly into someone else’s eyes.

When this happens, these two people are “out,” and must exclaim to each other, “Dude!” as they leave the circle. The last one or two left are declared winners of that round.



**Variation:** If you would rather not have a “winner,” the two people looking at each other can call out “Dude” and then change places with each other as fast as possible.

One caution – at times participants may follow a pattern which would prevent anyone from going out – stress that this is not allowed.

## Warmup #2: The Shakes

[www.childdrama.com/warmups](http://www.childdrama.com/warmups)

Everyone stands in a circle. One person begins to develop “the shakes” in one particular, localized part of his body. (For instance, his foot might begin to shake violently.) After the shakes are fully developed, that person “throws” the affliction across the circle to another person. Eye contact is important here, so that it is clear who is being “thrown” to. The new person “catches” the shakes in the same body part. Gradually the shakes move to a different body part. (For instance, the tremor might travel up the leg until it eventually comes to rest in a hand.) Once the affliction is firmly established in its new location, the victim “throws” it to another person, etc. Try not to repeat any body part exactly. (It may be necessary, of course, to repeat “foot,” but maybe the shakes themselves are different, or it locates in a particular toe or elsewhere the second time.) Continue to play until everyone runs out of ideas.

## Discussion

After the warm up activity or activities, discuss the terms drama, plot, setting, characters, conflict, climax and resolution. These terms could be compared to climbing a hill. The bottom of the hill is the beginning of the story or the plot. You are introduced to the characters and the setting. As the story continues you start climbing the hill, which involves some kind of conflict. The top of the hill is the climax or the most exciting part of the story and the resolution is climbing down the other side.

Talk about well-known stories or fairy tales (Three Billy Goats Gruff, Goldilocks and the Three Bears etc.) or have participants choose stories and point out the drama – naming the characters and the setting, the conflict, climax, and resolution. (Younger participants may enjoy acting out a favorite fairy tale.)

## Activity 1: This is a Shoe. A What? A Shoe.

*adapted from R. A. Vokac, 2003*

The script:

Person A: “This is a shoe.” (introduction of plot)

Person B: “A what?” (conflict)

Person A: “A shoe” (conflict)

Person B: “A what?” (climax)

Person A: “A shoe.” (resolution)

Person B: “Oh! A shoe” (resolution)

The dialogue is said in a rhythmic style.

Directions:

Participants are in a circle at arm’s length. One person (person A) has the shoe (or other object) and turns to the person on the left (person B) to begin the dialogue, offering the shoe at the same time. Person B responds to person A and at the end of the script takes the shoe.

Now person B has the shoe and becomes person A and turns to his left and starts the dialogue over again to the



person next to him. Continue like this until the shoe goes all the way around the circle and everybody has had the chance to say both A and B parts.

**Variation:**

After the first object has been started around the circle, introduce an additional object – two objects will be going around the circle at the same time – increase it to three objects, etc. Another variation is to start an object going around the circle in the opposite direction.

**Activity 2: You Can't Take Me**

*M. Buchanan, www.childdrama.com*

Divide into groups of four or five – each group is given a room in a house. The participant chooses an object in that room to portray.

Work with one group at a time. The other groups become the audience—which is incidentally an opportunity to practice being a good audience.

The teacher goes to the first group and exclaims, “My, look at all this useless stuff! I’ve got to get rid of some of this junk!” (plot)

The teacher selects one member and says, “I think I’ll take THIS thing away.” (conflict)

The member replies, “NO, YOU CAN’T TAKE ME!” (conflict)

“Why not?”

The member answers, without mentioning the name of his object, in this form: “If you take me away. . .” followed by something that would go wrong without the object. For example, if the member is pretending to be the bed, she might say, “If you take me away, no one will get any sleep.” A member pretending to be a wastebasket might say, “If you took me, there would be trash all over the place.”\* (climax)

When the teacher is satisfied with the answer, he could say “Okay, I guess you can stay.” (resolution)

Once all the members have had their say, the audience tries to guess what room they are in, and then what object each member is. Then the teacher moves on to the next group.

\* With younger children, stop at one answer. But with older members, improvise some reason that the member’s first answer isn’t compelling enough. “Well, I never sleep anyway.” “I like trash on the floor. I’m taking you anyway.” In this way I ask the members to think of more than one reason that something is important. Encourage them to think of creative answers. A member pretending to be the bed might say, “What would the kids jump on?”

Variation: Instead of a room, you could use different parts of the body – “without me you wouldn’t be able to walk” (foot) etc. With older members you could use different states, vocations, etc.



### Activity 3: Out of the Hat

Have the words “characters,” “setting,” “conflict,” and “resolution” in a hat (or box, etc.)(see handout at back of lesson). Have participants pick a word from the box and come up with a sample of the word. (Characters could be three little ducks, etc., setting could be at a grocery store, etc., conflict could be too many people in the room, etc., resolution could be they all held hands and sang a song, etc.) They can either say it out loud or write it on a piece of paper. Another participant is asked to tell a story using the examples given.

Variation: As the participant tells the story, the remaining participants could act it out.

### Activity 4: Say Yes, Say No

*R. A. Vokac, 2003*

Divide the group into partners of two. One person asks the other person to do something, such as “Joe, clean your room.” But you have a problem because Joe doesn’t want to clean his room. During the activity you try to get Joe to clean his room by asking him questions. Joe can only answer “yes” or “no” to what you ask. Keep asking questions until Joe agrees to clean his room or the conflict is resolved. Then switch places.

### REFLECT:

- How does the ability to work with others affect a theatrical performance?
- How did it feel when you were faced with a conflict in the activities?
- How did it feel when the conflict was resolved?

### APPLY:

- Are there times in your life when you need to work as a team? At school? At home? On the playground? On a sports team?
- Will you ever experience conflict in your daily activities?
- When are sometimes you may be part of the conflict? When can you be part of the resolution? When would either role be beneficial?

### REFERENCES:

- Reprinted with special permission by authors of: Discover: 4-H Theatre Arts Clubs, Utah State University Extension, February 2014
- Matt Buchanan, <http://www.childdrama.com>
- Ruth Ann Vokac, 2003 Play the Role, National 4-H Curriculum
- <http://wiki.answers.com>, <http://www.ask.com>, <http://answers.yahoo.com>,

## **Out of the Hat Activity Words**

Use the words below to cut out and place into a hat or box for the Out of the Hat Activity

**CHARACTER**

**SETTING**

**CONFLICT**

**RESOLUTION**

# Developing Character Roles



## EXPLORE THE CONTENT:

Lesson #4 is a great opportunity to teach your club members about how to use emotion and character history development to create scenes using improvisation.

### KEY TERMS

- Character: Participant in a story, scene or play; can be a person, object or animal.
- Improvisation: To make something up on the spot; to spontaneously make up drama without rehearsal.

### DO:

#### Warmup Activity

Have each participant stand facing you. Read each of the following emotions and ask the member to react by showing you what that emotion looks like using only facial expressions and body language but no sound (remind them what they learned in Lesson 2).

- Happy
- Sad
- Surprised
- Scared
- Angry
- Tired
- Silly
- Stuck-Up

#### REFLECT: Warmup Activity

- How did our warmup activity help you?
- How did you feel when you were expressing the different emotions?

#### Activity: Characters at the Bus Stop

Developing a character history is important to help you understand how your character might act in certain situations.

Brainstorm Together:

- Let's think of all the different types of people who might be waiting to catch a bus at the city bus stop (grandma, athlete, member, mom, child, etc.).
- Now let's think of all the reasons why they might be catching a bus. (Visit the sick, go to practice, go to class, go shopping for groceries, on a field trip to the zoo, etc.)

Writing:

Have each individual or group write the answers to the following questions:

### TIME:

45 to 60 minutes

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Paper
- Pens/Pencils
- 4 Chairs

### OBJECTIVES:

The 4-H member will:

- Define the following key terms: character, improvisation.
- Develop character history and bring the characters to life.
- Practice verbal and non-verbal communication skills.



- Either separately or in pairs, create a character who you think might show up at a bus stop.
- What is your character's name, age, residence, occupation and personality?
- Next, decide why your character is at the bus stop.
- Invent something your character needs from someone else at the bus stop. (Directions, someone to listen to him, encouragement, an idea for a gift for someone, etc.)
- Finally, determine what your character's emotions are based on, why they are there, and what they need.

#### Movement:

Using three to four chairs, set up a bus stop stage area and let two to three kids at a time practice moving as their character without speaking. Remind them to include why their character is there and what they need from someone else as they walk around.

#### Acting:

It's time to start the improvisation! One person (playing him/herself) will sit waiting for the bus. Another participant (in character - the one they previously created) will approach the waiting person, start to quickly get acquainted and try to get what they need from the person before the bus comes. They either succeed or fail. The bus comes (as dictated by the leader, or if your group is old enough - a youth acting as a director), the person waiting for the bus leaves and the other becomes the person waiting for the bus.

This process repeats until all youth have had a chance to arrive at the bus stop in character and tried to achieve an objective.

**Note:** If your group is small, each member can invent more than one character to play.

**Idea:** Make note of bus stop scenes that you might want to turn into a one-act play or Share-The-Fun skit.

#### **REFLECT: Characters at the Bus Stop**

- Did your character get what he or she needed at the bus stop?
- Was it easy or difficult to express what you needed at the bus stop?
- How did you handle it when someone came up and wanted something from you at the bus stop?

#### **APPLY:**

- How do people change their verbal and nonverbal communication if they aren't getting what they want?
- How can you express yourself more effectively in life to get what you need?

#### **REFERENCES:**

- Reprinted with special permission by authors of: Discover: 4-H Theatre Arts Clubs, Utah State University Extension, February 2014
- Ruth Ann Vokac, 2003 Play the Role, National 4-H Curriculum



# Rehearsed Acting Styles



## EXPLORE THE CONTENT:

Rehearsing acting styles teaches club members different rehearsed acting styles such as monologues and scene play using a script. Club members will write and work on character development of their own monologue.

## KEY TERMS

- Scene: A part of a play where there is no change in time or place until a blackout.
- Open Scene: A scene that could take place anywhere and the characters could be anyone.
- Monologue: A long speech by one actor/actress.
- Objective: What a character on stage wants to get or the desired goal which motivates his/her words and actions in a scene.
- Obstacle: The reason or situation preventing the character from getting what he/she wants.

## DO:

### Warmup Activity

In partners, have youth decide who will be “A” and who will be “B” for the open scene (Open Scene: A scene that could take place anywhere and the characters could be anyone). Have each partnership read through the scene twice.

Next, have club members decide who their characters are by answering the following questions:

- Who am I? (Name, age, occupation).
- What is my relationship with my partner? (Friend, mom, stranger, etc.).
- Where are we? (Home, school, bus stop, etc.).
- Finally, have club member’s act out the scene again based on their specific circumstances.

### REFLECT: Warmup Activity

- How did you come up with your character’s circumstances?
- How did reading the scene change from before you had a character to after you established your character’s circumstances?

### Activity: Monologues

Have participants use a step-by-step process to create their own monologues and prepare to perform them for each other (Monologue: A long speech by one actor/actress.) Begin by picking a subject they are interested in and asking questions like: “What

## TIME:

45 to 60 minutes

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Paper for each participant
- Pens/Pencils for each participant
- Printed copies of the warmup activity script below (one for each member)

## OBJECTIVES:

The 4-H member will:

- Identify the following key terms: scene, open scene, monologue, objective, and obstacle
- Develop a monologue complete with an objective and obstacle



do I love to do?" "What are my talents?" and "What would I spend my money on?" etc. Next, ask them to create a character who shares that same passion (name, age, occupation).

Once they have created the character have them decide on something the character wants. Tell them to be as specific as possible. This is the objective. (Objective: What a character on stage wants to get or their desired goal which motivates his/her words and actions in a scene.)

Next, have youth outline the reason why their character can't get the thing he/she wants. This is called an obstacle. (Obstacle: The reason or situation preventing the character from getting what he/she wants.)

Then, have youth create a second character who could give the first character what he/she wants.

Finally, give the reason why the second character won't give the first character what he/she wants.

Now that the basic outline is written, club members take turns reading their stories to a partner who will play the second character. Each person can ask questions or interrupt as the story is told in order to better understand the objective and obstacle of each character.

**Idea:** If time permits, have club members reverse roles and play each other's character. See how the scene plays out differently.

**Follow Up:** Tell youth they will perform these monologues for each other next time you meet as their final activity.

#### **REFLECT: Activity: Monologues**

- How much of you is expressed in your story?
- Did you get to the point where you just knew things about the character, like it was somebody real? Why?
- How did the response of the second character influence your monologue?

#### **APPLY:**

- In what other situations in life is it important to be flexible about decisions you make?
- How can writing help you better understand yourself and what you want and need?

#### **REFERENCES:**

- Reprinted with special permission by authors of: Discover: 4-H Theatre Arts Clubs, Utah State University Extension, February 2014
- Ruth Ann Vokac, 2003 Play the Role, National 4-H Curriculum



## Script for Warm-Up Activity

**A** I don't understand.

**B** What?

**A** I do not understand.

**B** What?

**A** I mean it. I don't understand.

**B** Okay.

**A** You think I'm crazy.

**B** I didn't say that.

**A** It doesn't matter anyway.

**B** I know

**A** Cool.

**B** What?

**A** I get it.

**B** What?

**A** I will always get it.

**B** I gotta go.

# Auditions



## EXPLORE THE CONTENT:

An audition teaches club members to perform the character-based monologue they wrote in lesson #5 in an audition setting.

### KEY TERMS

- **Audition:** An interview where an actor/actress demonstrates performance skills.

### DO:

#### Warmup Activity

Welcome everyone and have them break into groups of 2-3 to practice their monologues.

**Note:** Depending on how many are in your group, you may not have time to do this.

#### Activity: Auditions

Teach three basic concepts for an audition:

1. Address director
2. State name and title of monologue
3. Wait for director's signal to begin

Take turns listening to everyone perform their monologues.

Have listeners try to identify the objective and the obstacle of each monologue

### REFLECT:

- Were you nervous to recite your monologue in front of the group?
- How does rehearsing/practicing help calm your nerves?
- What other things in life are you sometimes nervous about? (first day of school, dentist, etc.)
- How can you prepare for those things so we don't feel as nervous?
- Review the objective/obstacle of a few of the participants' monologues as a group. Help each participant feel accomplished in their efforts.

### APPLY:

- How will you apply the life skills you have learned in this Theatre 4-H club to other situations you may encounter in life?
- How do these skills help you prepare to enter the workforce?

### TIME:

45 to 60 minutes

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Monologues developed in Rehearsed Acting Styles or other monologues provided by the leader

### OBJECTIVES:

The 4-H member will:

- Learn to figure cost analysis.
- Feel prepared for auditions in front of a group
- Work through nervousness of speaking in front of a group
- Identify the objective and obstacle in various monologues



## REFERENCES:

- Reprinted with special permission by authors of: Discover: 4-H Theatre Arts Clubs, Utah State University Extension, February 2014
- Ruth Ann Vokac, 2003 Play the Role, National 4-H Curriculum





MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

CORRECT: ● INCORRECT: ✗ ⊗ ⊖ ⊕

4-H Explore  
Project Book Evaluation - Theater and Performance Arts

1. Please read the statement in the left column of the table below. Bubble in the circles that describe your level of understanding **BEFORE** attending this program. In the section on the far right, bubble in the circles that describe your level of understanding **AFTER** attending this program. You will have two bubbles per row.

LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING: 1 = Poor, 2 = Average, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent	BEFORE				AFTER			
As a result of participating in the Theater & Performance Arts project lessons and activities...	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
I understand the role my senses play in using my imagination.	<input type="radio"/>							
I understand how my body language can impact conversations.	<input type="radio"/>							
I understand how my voice can convey different meanings.	<input type="radio"/>							
I understand theater dynamics, such as drama, characters, plot, conflict, etc.	<input type="radio"/>							
I understand the process of developing a character's history.	<input type="radio"/>							
I understand imagination can help solve problems.	<input type="radio"/>							

2. For each statement below, fill in the bubble that best describes you.

INTENTIONS TO ADOPT: As a result of participating in the Theater & Performance Arts Project lessons and activities...	Yes	No	Unsure
I can develop a character and its history.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I will use my body language to demonstrate what I want to share.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I plan to use my imagination to create things (such as stories and characters).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can develop a monologue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can confidently present a monologue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. For each statement below, fill in the bubble that best describes your level of agreement with the following statements.

BEHAVIOR CHANGES: As a result of participating in the Theater & Performance Arts Project lessons and activities...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am more comfortable working in a team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more willing to listen to others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more comfortable speaking with others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more confident in my abilities as a leader.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**MARKING INSTRUCTIONS**

CORRECT: ● INCORRECT: ✗ ⊗ ☐ ⊙

3. What is the most significant thing you learned in the Theater & Performance Arts project?

Please tell us about yourself.

**Gender:**       Female     Male

**I consider myself to be:**     African American                       White  
    Asian American                               Other  
    Native American

**I consider myself to be:**     Hispanic     Non-Hispanic

**Grade:**     3rd     5th     7th     9th     11th  
                  4th     6th     8th     10th     12th

**Most of the time, you live . . .**

<input type="radio"/> Farm or ranch	<input type="radio"/> Suburb of city between 50,000
<input type="radio"/> Town less than 10,000	<input type="radio"/> Central city/urban center with more than 50,000
<input type="radio"/> City between 10,000 - 50,000	

Please provide any additional comments below.

