

Name: _____

Hour: _____

Improvisation!

Watch the scene from *The Office* and write down what Steve Carell's character (Michael) did as an actor to kill (pun intended) his improvisation scenes. (i.e. What choices as an actor did he make to prevent his scene from moving forward?)

“Rules” for Improvisation (day 2)

1. Give “ GIFTS ”

GIVE your partner specific information in the scene that allows him/her to progress and be successful in the scene.

a. Avoid Questions ! (they pressure your partner)

For example, don't ask “So what is your name and what do you do?”

Instead state: “Well, Mr. Willameir, I see that you have done extensive work with taming lions, but we're really looking for someone with more people skills...”

List the gifts given to a scene partner in this statement:

b. Establish Characters and Relationships

The most interesting aspects of characters are often revealed not by what they say about themselves but by what other characters say about them. The best gift that you can give your partner in an improvised scene is a steady barrage of character endowments.

Example:

Player 1: I am ready, Monsieur. You may paint my portrait.”

Player 2: Ah, merci! It is an honor to immortalize the image of Madame Solvant, the wealthiest and most influential woman in all of France!”

Activity: Character “Gift” Ping Pong

Read with a partner. Then go back and circle all of the character “gifts” given by partners.

1: Professor! You grew a beard!

2: Simon! Back from Congress?

1: Yes, to seek your help. You are the most respected authority on global warming.

2: Ah, yes! I read about your initiative on the floor. It’s an uphill battle, you know. But then again, Simon Lapinsky was never a man to shrink from a challenge.

1: And Professor Potsdam was never a man to turn his back on a former student in need.

2: Simon, such a marvelous knack for enlisting the support of others. What can I do for you?

1: Well, Professor, I know that you’re an enthusiastic conspiracy theorist –

2: Simon, how careless of you! They have microphones everywhere! That loose tongue of yours shall be your downfall yet!*

c. Establish the _____ Environment

Read with a partner. Then go back and circle all of the environment “gifts” given by partners.

1: Wow, I bet nobody’s been in the attic for years.

2: The dust must be three inches thick.

1: The light switch is over there, by the old trunk.

2: I can barely get to it; there are so many boxes in the way.

1: Ooh, there’s m old microscope! I used to love this thing.

2: It’s freezing up here. So, this was your bedroom?

1: Yeah, it was cool. I was the only kid with a skylight in his bedroom.

2: Well, after we’re married, we’ll buy a great, big house, and we’ll put a great, big skylight in the bedroom just for you. And we can even put up all of this tacky, brown wall paneling from the ‘70’s!

1: Hey, Mom and I put this up by ourselves. That’s why none of the panels actually touch and you can see all the plasterboard behind them.**

*from *How to Improvise a Full Length Play* by Kenn Adams, pg 111-112

**from *How to Improvise a Full Length Play* by Kenn Adams, pg 126-127