

IMPROV INTENSIVE 2019

(formally Improv Olympix)

Games packet

HEAD TO HEAD GAMES

PROPS

In this game the players need to come up with an original/funny use of a prop. They cannot use the prop the way it is supposed to be used. Each team will receive a prop. The teams will go back and forth creating short scenes integrating the prop (think 5-30 seconds long) until the host ends the game. The host will be in charge of switching focus back and forth from each team (so be ready to share focus). Each team will have one prop for the entire game. They do not get to switch or receive a new prop at any time.

TIPS FOR PLAYERS:

- Endow the scene with the aspects of CORE (Character, Objective, Relationship, Environment) quickly. Whether the host decides to make your scene so short that it is only a one-liner is up to the host, but don't intentionally go for a laugh on every line or the scene won't be able to stand on its own.
- You could really use any object as if it were a cell phone, but that is not the idea of the exercise. Look at unique aspects of object (or its parts) and see what inspires you.
- When the host switches it to the other team, immediately stop talking and give complete, intentional focus to the other team.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Team A is given an umbrella and they all pretend to get in it and use it like a boat to cross the ocean in search of treasure. Switch to Team B who has a cigar box. Team B acts like the box is very mouthy Roomba. Switch to Team A with the umbrella. They use the umbrella as a javelin for a joust. Four people on the team act as the horse under the final person that

wields it. Switch to Team B (cigar box) who are viewing the casket of a very tiny politician. Etc.

SILENCE IS GOLDEN

Two lines. Two people at a time, one each from opposing teams, come downstage and create a scene. The catch is, each person can only speak once. They can only say one sentence. That is not to say they can't elongate words, make a noise while speaking, etc., but they only get to speak one sentence. That's it. Where that sentence occurs in the scene is up to them. Each team will send one player at a time to participate with an opposing team. "Mouthing," lipreading, or pantomiming the act of making words is not allowed.

TIPS FOR PLAYERS:

- Relationships are key. It will be easiest to always assume the characters know each other so well they do not need to use words to communicate. Introductions or characters who are bad communicators are going to be difficult to play.
- Play it true. Be sincere. There is simply no need to speak. Melodrama will not read well. "Mouthing words" is against the rules.
- Use your whole body and the entire space.

FOR EXAMPLE:

The suggestion/stimulus is technology. The first player from Team A moves downstage and pantomimes snapchatting in various poses while Team B's player begins to act like the person receiving the messages. The person receiving acts horrified by the images they are receiving. Finally, they get so upset they knock on the imaginary door between them and wait for the first player to answer. They do and say, "what is your problem?" The second player says, "Why are you always doing this, mom?!!"

TEAM GAMES

***Both round 2 & 3 games have a time limit of 5 minutes**

BADDIES DIY

The audience provides a genre and villains from that genre. Then the team creates a DIY project that needs to get done and requires every player (none can be experts) to help. The scene ends when the project is complete. Example genre: horror. Baddies: Freddy, Jason, Michael Myers, Pinhead, The "Ring" water spirit girl.... Then they put together something nifty.

TIPS FOR PLAYERS:

- On opposite poles of how to handle attention are “absolute difference” and “total diva.” You don’t want to do either. Play it right down the middle with “find your own portion but share.”
- There is bound to be a period while all the ideas come together and that could either seem awkward or natural. How you handle that period is vital to the success of the scene. Both the audience and your team members will sense a *performer’s* panic and hesitation. If you substitute that with your *character’s* interest and engagement, then you will be fine. How do you do that? 1) Keep your hands busy with objects in the scene 2) Don’t just stand around hoping for someone to say the perfect thing to “save” the scene. 3) Keep asking yourself what your character wants.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Suggestion/stimulus: Genre: Action. Baddies: The Terminator, Alien, Russian Boxer, Sniper Assassin. The team decides to remodel their kitchen in their secret headquarters. In their attempts, they keep accidentally destroying their materials (the Alien’s blood eats through the cabinet doors, the Russian Boxer can’t wield a hammer because he is wearing boxing gloves, every time the Terminator says “Hasta La Vista” the Spanish speaking contractors leave, etc.). Finally, they decide to have an open concept kitchen with open shelving and concrete floors so that they avoid daily destruction.

HEAR NO EVIL, SEE NO EVIL, SPEAK NO EVIL

Three players (hear/see/speak) are responding to some kind of emergency provided by the audience. They could be police, paramedics, pit crew members, steam cleaners, family members who find a stain on the rug, or aliens ameliorating a crash site. A fourth player is “blind” to the action because they have their back to the stage and face the audience and act as a voice that is interested in updates. They act as dispatch, doctor, the insurance company, journalist, head butler, grandma or “mothership.” They occasionally call in for updates and hear/see/speak have to provide details. If there is a fifth player, they can be onstage as a part of the emergency.

TIPS FOR PLAYERS:

- You can play hear/see/speak as literal, metaphorical, or both.
- The fourth, “Voice” player must help keep CORE intact and the scene moving forward. The Voice role can be fun, but not funny at the expense of the scene.
- All other players respond to the fourth player in character

- The key is really the relationships between the characters. The game requires interplay and dependence.
- A fifth player can be a civilian and help hear/see/speak within the scene.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Suggestion/stimulus is Halloween. The three players are cleaning ladies and men who are showing up to clean the city after Halloween. The owner of the cleaning service is the fourth player - "The Voice." She or he dispatches their team to deal with the chaos of leftover candy, cheap costumes, etc. in the streets. Speak No Evil is so excited to clean up Halloween because their parents never let them participate in such holidays and they never knew why. He or she keeps putting on the discarded costumes and eating the candy, etc. while cleaning in a joyous mood. Hear No Evil starts to build a tower of debris and trash because they thought their boss told them to erect a new city monument, not to clean the streets. See No Evil is scared of all the masks and costumes and must close their eyes while cleaning. The boss calls and wants them to hurry up because the work week is starting any moment! See No Evil gets flustered, but still won't open their eyes so they stumble into the tower being built by Hear No Evil, which sends them into a rage. Speak No Evil gets the other two to calm down while spinning a tale about the real reason Halloween exists, which is to provide food for the hungry and acceptance for those who have interesting fashion choices. When the boss calls the final time for an update, the city is clean because Speak No Evil has convinced the other two to take home all of the leftovers from Halloween as keepsakes of the charitable and loving holiday. However, Hear No Evil just took home leftovers because they thought Speak No Evil said that was how they would be "kept safe" not a keepsake. They have done so for their own safety, which they explain to the boss when he or she calls the final time.

CAPTAIN'S LOG

One human character and the other performers on the team play aspects of the futuristic set (or not-so-futuristic set). One player will play an offstage Artificial Intelligence (AI) interacting with the human character. The others have a lot more liberty. They could play just about anything. They act as "limbs" under the will of the intelligent voice.

The suggestions/stimuli for the scene are 1) some event the human is preparing for and 2) something bothersome. The human character will enter the scene fresh from the bothersome occurrence while preparing for the event.

Note: the scene does not have to be sci-fi. The AI does not have to be Artificial. If the players can think of another way to make an off-stage, intelligent voice work, do it! It was sort of done with the Wizard of Oz's throne room, after all. The only real requirements are 1) the human character dealing with the suggestions 2) The offstage, intelligent voice who has a

personality and a real relationship with the human character 3) The other players are the acting extensions of the voice's will 4) The human character will enter the scene fresh from the bothersome occurrence while preparing for the event.

TIPS FOR PLAYERS:

- There should be some kind of real relationship and dialogue between the human and the conversational, intelligent environment.
- The AI should be a very clear speaker with a rich personality
- "Prop" players can be multiple props. They do not have to remain the same prop for the entirety of the scene. What conventions the players use to show the audience they have switched from one prop "character" to another is up to them, but it must be clear.
- Part of the fun is that the prop players are essentially slaves of the AI. The "prop" players are never to simply be general robots who can do everything (like Rosie from the Jetsons or R2D2). That would be too easy. They may be robotic chairs or there may be intelligent plants. They might give a massage as a chair or reach across the room to be more easily sniffed, but a chair or a plant cannot simply print money or land a plane.
- Part of the fun is how the AI and environment help the human deal with the bothersome occurrence and prepare for the event.
- The AI and the human's needs should be a challenge to the props who constantly must justify

FOR EXAMPLE:

The suggestion/stimulus event the human is mining water on Mars and the bothersome occurrence is they are running out of oxygen and have three days left in their suit. The human comes in and establishes that the AI has been with him/her since they were a baby. The AI knows everything about them and just how they like things. Unfortunately, since the AI depends on verbal commands, the human is losing time since he/she is running out of air. Also, the AI is so old that it is starting to decay which leads to occasional malfunctions. As they prepare the materials for creating water with their props (an aquifer drill and water tank that speaks) the human keeps shortening their sentences to conserve air and the AI keeps inferring the complete command. For example, the human might say, "prepare the land..." and the AI responds with, "for construction for a new house." The human responds with, "not a house but a..." and the AI says, "garden". They go back and forth while the props scramble to achieve the goals articulated by the human and AI. Finally, the human runs out of air and while holding their breath, they pantomime what they want to happen. The AI malfunctions and assumes the human is a foreign invader and drives him/her into the ground for safekeeping until the authorities can collect them. Ironically,

the force with which the AI drove the human into the ground creates a fissure that brings up the water that the human wanted to begin with. They all celebrate!

RETURN TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

The suggestion/stimulus is a location where the first scene takes place. The game is done in four parts, each going backwards to the original event. The first three parts are short interviews at different locations between a detective, private eye, or journalist with different people who came in the path of chain of events. The first scene is about what happened last. The second scene is about what happened second last. The third scene is about what happened after the crime. The fourth is the actual crime.

TIPS FOR PLAYERS:

- Whomever has a good memory should plan to go last, I.E. perform in the final scene where the original crime took place. They will need to make sure the final scene works with the preceding three.
- Keep it simple. The more complex, the harder it is to remember and then justify the connections throughout.
- The crime should not involve murder or any other cruel act. It should be simple and PG.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Suggestion/stimulus is Swimming Pool. First scene is a swimmer-athlete being interviewed about how the high school principal was pulled out of the water by students after he jumped off the high-dive, trying to grab a bird. She describes his frantic belly-flop in great details. Second scene is the vice-principal explaining how she walked into the office where the principal had been running around, trying to catch a bird that had gotten into the office. It had a key in its mouth. The third scene is told by the janitor. One time during lunch, he was taking a nap near the boiler room. When he woke, he saw the principal unlock the boiler room with a special key and tiptoe inside, stashing a paper sack in a hidden safe. The original crime is that the principal steals some brownies from the bake sale table and stuffs them in a paper sack.