

Rain City Improv

TEACHER'S STUDY GUIDE

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Improv in the Schools

Fast paced, hilarious, and highly interactive! Every show features fun, inclusive improv scenes using willing volunteers and a variety of diverse audience suggestions. Our performers will adapt to and engage any crowd, whether it's a gymnasium full of elementary school students, or a small group of high school seniors. Students will gain confidence through the collaboration, creativity, and imagination of improv storytelling.



About Rain City Improv

Founded in 2021 by Taz VanRassel, *Rain City Improv* focuses on unscripted comedy theatre geared towards ages 5 to 18. Each performance is heavily inspired by audience suggestions and volunteers that make every show totally unique.



Taz VanRassel has been committed to a life of improvisational performance since he was introduced to it in high school. In the last 25 years, Taz has performed for thousands of diverse audiences, establishing himself as an enthusiastic member of both the Vancouver and global improv community. While he has been performing in secondary, middle, and elementary schools since 2005 he is very excited to be venturing forward under his own umbrella of *Rain City Improv*.

For audiences grades K-12

THEMES:

- COMEDY
- CREATIVITY
- EMPOWERMENT
- IMAGINATION
- IMPROVISATION
- INTERACTION
- LISTENING SKILLS
- NARRATIVE
- SPONTANEITY
- STORY TELLING
- TEAMWORK



ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

CREATE YOUR OWN STORY This game is very simple and can be played with students as young as kindergarten, but older students and even adults can benefit by its sheer simplicity. It can be done with two people, a small group, or even an entire classroom. Participants can do this exercise either verbally or by writing out their contributions to the story. Just fill in the blanks.

Once upon a time, there was a _____

And every day _____

Until one day _____

And because of that, _____

And because of that, _____

And because of that, _____

And in the end, _____

(Add as many 'And because of that' lines as needed.)

WARM-UP EXERCISES

Firing Line (Groups of 4) — One actor faces a line of three others. In turn, they fire words at the single person who has to reply with the first word that comes to mind (free association). The three do not associate but think of words as different as possible.

Circle Stories (Groups of 4—6) — Create a title for the story. One actor starts with one word, the next actor adds another word, and so on as the story is built round the circle making grammatical sense while producing a story that is logical on its own terms. Don't judge — just listen and go with the flow. Pairs and small groups can practice this exercise until they think almost as one and the stories become vivid and fun. This exercise can be done with single words, short phrases, or complete sentences.

Orchestrated Stories (Groups of 4—6) One actor is chosen as the conductor of the orchestra. As the conductor points to different players, that player tells part of the story for as long as the conductor wishes to let them continue. It could be for a full minute, or it could be just a few seconds.

BASIC IMPROVS

Solo Activity (1 actor) — Choose a common daily activity like making a sandwich or washing the dishes. Use props if available. While performing this activity tell a story describing an event or incident from your past.

Job Interview (2 actors) — Two actors are required. One in the interviewer, the other is the applicant. Only at the start of the scene should the actors be informed as to what the job is that the applicant is being interviewed for. The more creative the job, the better. For example, Time Machine Operator, Food Taster for the Queen, etc.

Beginnings (2 or 3 actors) — One or two of the actors perform wild, arbitrary movements and, on a signal such as a whistle, the actors freeze while the remaining actor(s) must explain what it is they are doing by observing the body positions.

