

**Title:** Beginning Workshop in Improvisation

**Grade:** High School

**Author:** Eric Ritter

**Date:** Spring 2018

**Lesson Outcomes**

After this unit, students will understand the history and influence that improvisational technique has had on modern day comedy and drama as a whole, through readings, lectures, but mostly through active participation in the form itself. Students will be able to practice and strengthen skills that they have already learned in previous performance units and expand that skill set as they begin improvisations. Students will also get an opportunity to do active research on still images that portray various types of status. This will enable students to grow both as performers and strengthen research skills. Students will understand the influences that improvisational technique has had on theatre and film practice. Through lectures, video tutorials, and improv exercises, students will understand and practice the fundamentals of an improvised comedic performance. Students will be assessed on their commitment and participation in exercises, lectures, research, and the final group performance in front of an audience of their family and peers.

**Objectives for Unit:**

After this unit, students will understand the history and influence that improvisation has had on modern day comedy through readings, lectures, and performance. Students will understand the structure of a solid improvised scene, its elements, and how comedic characters behave within a scene. Students will be able to practice and strengthen skills that they have already learned in previous performance units and expand that skill set as they begin short form improvisations. Students will also have the opportunity and expectation to research various types of status through still images. This will enable students to grow both as performers and add to their researching skills. Students will understand the influences that the improvisational form has had on theatre and film practice. Through lectures, video tutorials, and improv exercises students will understand and practice the fundamentals of improvised comedy. Students will be assessed on their commitment and participation in exercises, lectures, and the final group performance as an improv comedy troupe.

**National Theatre Standards:**

TH:CR2.1.II.b. Cooperate as a creative team to make interpretive choices for a drama/theatre work.

TH:Pr4.1.II.a. Discover how unique choices shape believable and sustainable drama/theatre work.

**Lesson 1 – “Base Reality” and introduction of improvisational concepts**

**Today we will:** Students will practice and perform the ground “rules” of improvisation as well as begin to get in touch with their improvisational psyches and gauge the various styles of improvisation.

**Teaching Objectives:**

- To introduce and explain improvisation
- To introduce and explain the beginning of a scene
- To outline how a base reality can be created
- To allow students to become comfortable with their improvisational peers

**Student Objectives:**

- Read about and discuss improvisation and its modern-day applications
- Understand the lasting influence improv can have on performance as a whole

**Essential Questions:**

1. What is improvisation?
2. What is its role in performance?
3. What is its role in everyday life?

## Learning Set

### Gain Attention

As students enter the room, have a YouTube clip paused on the monitor. Ask them to take out their journals; they will take notes to start a new unit but first, will watch some movie clips. Before playing the clips, explain that they are from "Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark," "The Wolf of Wall Street," and "Midnight Cowboy". After the clips, start a discussion:

- What's your opinion on these scenes? Did they work or not work for you? Why or why not?
- Did you know these scenes were not part of the script but completely improvised? Where do you think the origins of these actors' impulses came from to do the things that they did?

After students share out their answers, begin a reading from the introduction of the "Comedy Improvisation Manual: Section I The Beginning of a Scene."

### Review/State Prerequisite

"Today we are starting a new unit that will require improv. In our other theatre classes, we have lightly explored improv techniques and today we are going to begin to delve deeper into this form. Can anyone tell me what improv is?"

Students will contribute ideas based on their prior knowledge.

"Great! Here's the definition of improv we will be using in this class. Has anyone ever seen an improv comedy show or something like it before?"

Students will contribute answers and discuss examples of improv style comedy in popular media as well as in live theatre.

### Advance Organizer

- 1) YouTube clips, PowerPoint, discussion (10 minutes)
- 2) Reading from introduction of UCB manual (10 minutes)
- 4) "Big Booty" game (5 minutes)
- 5) "Point at things" 3-part game (20 mins)
- 3) Discussion and Questions (5 minutes)
- 4) Review, Standards, and closure (5 minutes)

## 2) Present Information

### Describe

#### Part 1:

After the viewing and discussing the clips, present a PowerPoint with a brief history/origins of improvisation

- Typical scenarios/games
- Use in other forms
- Extended field application

#### Part 2:

After describing what improvisational performances are like, ask students to come up with modern examples of improvisation in today's entertainment industry/media.

#### Part 3:

Read the introduction to "Base Reality" from the "UCB: Comedy Manual" on the beginnings of a scene.

**Part 4:**

First a short warm-up game of “Big Booty.” Students split into groups of 5-10. One person is “Big Booty,” and the rest are numbered clockwise. Everyone in rhythm sings the “Big Booty” song and the large booty shouts a number. X then responds with another number etc. if anyone messes up, he/she goes to the end of the line and all other players move up in the rotation.

“Point at Things” is divided into 3 parts. Part A) involves all students simultaneously pointing to objects in the environment and stating what they realistically are. Part B) involves students pointing at things in the environment and stating they are what the last object actually was. Part C) involves students pointing at objects in the environment and stating what they are *something other than what they actually are*.

**Demonstrate**

**Part 1:**

The PowerPoint will include pictures to clarify the information.

**Part 2:**

Students will need to participate in a discussion over the real word applications of improvisation.

**Students Refine Learning**

**Practice**

**Part 1:**

Students will be asked to take notes on the history and influence of improv and its elements.

**Part 2:**

In addition to notes, students will be asked to come up with modern examples of improvised characters/traits/scenarios.

**Feedback**

**Part 1:**

Lead a discussion about the improvisational performance and its history.

**Part 2:**

After the students have viewed the PowerPoint, lead a class discussion about their favorite comedies/cartoons and analyze how those forms use improvisational techniques.

- What are some of your favorite comedy films/scenes? Why?
- What makes them “funny?”
- What are some of your least favorite films/scenes? Why?
- Why do some things work in some contexts and others do not? (Get a big class discussion going about this)

**Closure**

**Summary**

Discuss what was learned today by reviewing the standards which this lesson addresses. Show each standard that was covered, then ask the students to explain how that standard was covered.

**Transfer**

Once a student explains how a standard was met, ask the other students for more specific information. For example, if a student says a standard was covered by discussing history, ask another student for a historical fact that they learned from the lesson.

**Near Transfer**

“What aspects are you most excited to explore and why?” This question will help link the lecture to the next lesson. This will also help gauge if each aspect was covered in enough detail.

“Great job today everyone! Next class we will begin learning how to generate ideas quickly and incorporate them into a performance, so please wear clothes you can move in. Have a great day!”

**Modifications for Special Needs:**

Students who are behind in writing/reading or have learning disabilities will be accommodated – copies of the notes from the PowerPoint can be provided. For students who struggle to write, the lecture can be recorded; most of this lesson is discussion based, not note based. The YouTube will be played with captions so students with hearing disabilities are able to read and watch the videos.

**Supplemental Materials:**

History and Introduction to Improv. PowerPoint (included at the end of unit)  
UCB: Comedy Improvisation Manual by Matt Besser, Ian Roberts, and Matt Walsh  
YouTube access

**Lesson 2 – First thought: Best Thought/“Yes And...”**

**Today we will:** Students will practice the disciplines “Yes And...” (essentially the act of accepting what is given to the performer and building on it) and First Thought, Best thought (essentially going with your “gut” and shedding away self-criticism.)

**Teaching Objectives:**

- To demonstrate “Yes And...” improvisational techniques.
- To demonstrate “First Thought, Best Thought” improvisational techniques
- To outline how the three concepts: “Yes And...” “First Thought, Best Thought” and “Base Reality” work in tandem to construct the foundation of a scene.

**Student Objectives:**

- Analyze “Yes And...” and “First Thought...Best Thought.”
- Practice “Yes And...” and “First Thought...Best thought.”
- Compare and contrast the three concepts and discuss/formulate how they work in tandem, “without thinking about it.”

**Essential Questions:**

- 1) What are the benefits of “Yes And...” and “First Thought Best Thought,” to both the other actor and yourself?
- 2) How are these concepts different from other forms of theatre that we study? How is it similar?
- 3) In these concepts what are the major elements that drive the action for the actor and the scene itself?

**Learning Set****Gain Attention**

As soon as the bell rings indicating the start of the class, loudly state, “Everyone, on your feet and stand in a circle on the stage!” Students will then proceed to do just that.

**Review/State Prerequisite**

“Last class we went over some of the history of improvisation and we talked about “Base Reality.” Can anyone remind me what that is?”

“What are some of the aspects we talked about last class? What are some modern-day examples?”

Students will review what was covered last class while stretching and warming up their bodies. Students will discuss more modern examples of improvised performances.

“Perfect! Today we are going to learn the two most foundational elements of improvisation: “Yes And...” and “First Thought, Best Thought.” Can anyone tell me in a nutshell what these concepts mean? Are there any questions?”

## Advance Organizer

### 1) Discussion (15 minutes)

- Compare and contrast with other forms of theatre we have studied/ improv history
- What is “Base Reality?”
- What are some modern examples of improvised performances?

### 2) Playing “Yes” (Warm-up) (10 minutes)

### 3) Playing “Yes Lets!” in groups. (15 minutes)

### 4) Come back together and discuss as a group (20 minutes)

- What is the importance of “saying yes”?
- What is the importance of building on a suggestion?
- How do the two work in tandem to create the “Yes And...” technique and support a scene?

### 6) Gather into a circle and play the idea generating game “Da-Doo-Da-Doo” (10 minutes)

### 7) Break into groups and play “When I Dream...” (30 minutes)

### 8) Review analysis as class and discussion (20 minutes)

- What are the challenges of “First Thought, Best Thought?”
- What helps you, the actor, come up truly spontaneous thoughts? What hinders you?
- What causes you to become self-conscious and question yourself? What aids in preventing this?

### 9) Journaling time for students to write and answer the discussion questions and the essential questions (10 minutes)

### 10) Review, summary of lesson, review of Standards (5 minutes)

## 2) Present Information

### Describe

After playing the main event games, the class will review the strategies used to analyze one’s strengths and pitfalls regarding both “Yes And...” and “First Thought, Best Thought.”

### Demonstrate

As a class, identify how “Yes And...” and “First Thought, Best Thought” concepts and practices can be used to incorporate into potential character relationships, character motivation, and elements that influence the action of a scene.

## Students Refine Learning

### Practice

After demonstrating, students will be broken into groups of 8-9. As groups they will perform the activities of “Yes Lets!” and “When I Dream...” so that they are pertinent to our essential questions and Standards.

### Feedback

Lead a discussion on what the groups found. Then, the class will compare and contrast “First Thought, Best Thought,” “Yes And...” and “Base Reality.” Discuss the elements that are in all three, and that are in all improv scenarios.

- What is “First Thought, Best Thought” in a nutshell?
- Why is this so critical to improv?
- What is “Base Reality” in a nutshell?
- Why is it important to have a foundation in scene like the “Base Reality” concept provides?
- How do these two concepts play off and incorporate one another together?

## Closure

### Summary

Students will be given time to journal and answer guiding questions. They may choose to answer the questions, summarize what we did in class, or a combination of the two; as long as they are writing and reflecting, allow them to do what is most helpful to them. After they have written in their journals, review the Standards that were explored during the lesson.

**Transfer**

“How can we apply what we have learned today about improv into the work of an actor as a whole?”

Possible answers include:

- In other performances (Film and Theatre)
- Able to see what builds strong story structure in TV shows or movies
- Able to identify character motivation in a TV show or movie

**Near Transfer**

“How can we apply what we have learned about improv to other parts of theatre?”

Possible answers include:

- Character development
- As an actor, finding motivation within the script
- Knowing how success and failure help character construction.

“Great job today everyone! Thank you for your contribution and participation. Next class we will start working with character movement and the beginnings of a scene so please wear things you can easily move in. Have a great day!”

**Modifications for Special Needs:**

Students who are behind in writing/reading will be given the classwork/expectations ahead of time, so they have more time to read them. Journals are collected once every other week so students do not have to rush with writing; whatever journal entries do not get done in class will become homework.

**Supplemental Materials:**

*When I Dream...* Board game

Copy of *The Upright Citizens Brigade: Comedy Improvisation Manual*.

**Lesson 3 - Characterization within Improvisation**

**Today we will:** Students will practice and perform a number of character building exercises, perform a number of “performance style” games that focus predominately on the characters involved as well as how they interact w/ one another, and will demonstrate the movement and improvisation techniques we have studied.

**Teaching Objectives:**

- To introduce movement concepts as a way to develop character
- To outline how the actor and techniques inform their characters

**Student Objectives:**

- Recall and discuss “Yes And...” “First Thought/Best Thought,” and “Base Reality.”
- Develop an understanding for the concept of movement and connect it to character development

**Essential Questions:**

- 1) How do different parts of the body effect character?
- 2) How does movement inform character development?
- 3) What does a developing a character contribute to a scene?

**Learning Set****Gain Attention**

Upon entering the room, the students will be instructed that we are focusing on character today and to put their things down and proceed to go outside onto the open field. Quickly warm up with a focus game of “Yes”.

### Review/State Prerequisite

“Last class we went over the fundamental improv techniques of “First Thought/Best Thought” and “Yes And...” What are some elements of those techniques?

“What are some of the games/exercises we did last class? What are their main functions during improvisational scenes?

Students will review what was covered last class while stretching and warming up their bodies. Students will discuss more modern examples of improvisation.

“Great! Today we are going to be exploring how these techniques become incorporated into characterization. We are now going outside to play a highly physical game to get you used to an exaggerated physical stance.”

### Advance Organizer

- 1) Entering, go outside, Playing focus game of “Yes” (10 minutes)
- 2) Review of previously learned material and stretching (10 minutes)
- 3) Walking through the space (15 minutes)
  - Walk around the space in a neutral stance
  - Now lead with nose
  - Now lead with chest
  - Now lead with belly
  - Now lead with chin, belly tucked in
  - Now lead with hips
  - Now lead with knees
  - Now lead with feet
- 4) Re-enter auditorium (4 minutes)
  - Ask students what stood out to them from the exercises
- 5) “Super Heroes!” (20 minutes)
- 6) Split into groups and play “Party Quirks” (20 minutes)
- 7) Wigs/ Hats “YouTube Stars” (20 minutes)

## 2) Present Information

### Describe

After the review, warmups, and walking around the space, students will discuss the elements that make up a “character.” (i.e. speech pattern, appearance, voice, tone, point-of-view etc.)

### Demonstrate

The class will go through their own improvised character’s stance, walk, and leading body part while coming up with voices and “points-of-view” on topics. If needed, teacher will coach and help students find those exaggerated poses. Encourage students to try adding sounds as well.

Shout out different traits and attributes for student’s characters to embody. Let them embrace those attributes while continuing to walk around the space for approx. 30-60 seconds before providing another trait/attribute.

## Students Refine Learning

### Practice

After demonstrating, students will play “Super Heroes,” “Party Quirks,” and “Wigs/Hat YouTube Personalities.”

Guiding questions and statements for these activities:

- Make eye contact with someone and have an interaction.
- In these characters, how do you feel (powerful, vulnerable, etc.)?
- Try exploring a character trait that you don’t automatically gravitate towards.

Students will “rapid fire” play these games while, keeping notes on what works and what does not for them.

**Feedback**

Lead a discussion about how the character's shape effects with development onstage.

- What was your favorite character to play?
- What was your favorite character to watch?
- Why were they your favorites? What characteristics made them that way?
- What challenges did you face while trying out these different characterizations?

**Closure****Summary**

Have a discussion of what they learned today and compare that to the Standards.  
Discuss how the students used mainly their bodies and voices to create a character.

**Transfer**

"How can we apply what we have learned today about physicality to areas outside of theatre?"

Possible answers include:

- Reading other people's moods
- Helps you put on a mask/different mood so you can give a presentation
- Body language

**Near Transfer**

"How can we apply what we have learned about physicality to theatre?"

Possible answers include:

- Character development
- Raised importance to characterization to make performances more compelling to watch
- Dance

"Great job today everyone! Thank you for your contribution and participation. Next class we will cover on "Finding the Game in the Scene." Have a great day!"

**Modifications for Special Needs:**

Students who are behind in writing/reading or have learning disabilities will be accommodated.

**Supplemental Materials:**

Copy of "The Improv Handbook"

**Lesson 4 - Status and "Finding the Game"**

**Today we will:** Students will practice and perform improv scenes that incorporate status and "game" searching, and will demonstrate the movement and improvisation techniques we have studied.

**Teaching Objectives:**

- To guide students through a research process
- To guide students through a performance process

**Student Objectives:**

- Research status images
- Find status and "game" in scene
- Justify choices with research

**Essential Questions:**

- 1) How is status used?
- 2) What does finding the "game" in a scene provide to an audience?
- 3) As a performer, what do you need to know about character status and finding the "game" for your scenes to be successful?

## Learning Set

### Gain Attention

Upon entering the room, there will be still images of many different types of people in different status, emotional states, and positions for students to closely examine. While looking at the images, ask the students the following questions:

- What do you notice about the features of the people?
- What are they conveying?
- What are the people communicating to each other just from this single still moment?
- What can you gather about their back stories?

### Review/State Prerequisite

“Before we start, what are some topics we have covered in this unit so far?”

Students will review what we have covered in the unit thus far.

“So far in this unit we have talked about the history of improv, we looked at scenarios and character motivation, and we practiced how we can incorporate “Yes And...” and “First Thought/Best Thought.” Today we will start working on incorporating status into our scenes as well as finding the “game” of a scene.”

“What are some qualities of these images that stand out to you? What do you want to learn about these people?”

“I want you to keep those in mind. Today we are going to go to the computer lab and research status.”

### Advance Organizer

- 1) Review of unit and components of improvisation techniques (5 minutes)
- 2) Research in computer lab (40 minutes)
- 3) Presentations of “status” images (40 minutes)
- 4) Play status game “Status Ladder” (20 minutes)
- 5) Play status game “Go Through a Weird Door” (20 minutes)
- 6) Play “New Choice” Game (20 minutes)
- 7) Review of Standards

## 2) Present Information

### Describe

The teacher can play examples of these games with a volunteer to the students, and then discuss them as a class. For the rest of the status information, encourage students to find some information on their own through research.

### Demonstrate

The examples of the games played by the teacher and shown to the class will demonstrate how the games will ideally flow. To demonstrate the quality of research students should work towards, provide them with examples and questions to answer as what to look for regarding “status.”

## Students Refine Learning

### Practice

Students’ research should address the following questions:

- What is meant by “status?”
- What about “status” can be positive, negative and/or neutral to a scene/ life of a character?
- How is status conveyed in a simple image?
- How is status conveyed with both visual and auditory clues?

Students will then find and present their images to the class. They will use the research they did to justify choice of image, and what is being conveyed. Once students have finished image presentations, move on to playing “Half-Life” and “Go through a Weird Door”.

**Feedback**

For presentation, students will show their images and describe the status of the people in the images and how they discerned that information. The rest of the class and the teacher will comment on each other's images and discuss how variable status' can be incorporated into scene work.

- Why do you think I had you do this assignment?
- What does "status" mean to you?
- How are different "status" portrayed in everyday life?
- How could "status" be a part of improv?

**Closure****Summary**

Discuss what we have discovered about status, "finding the game," and the process. Then, compare that to the Standards.

Talk about the process of research, design, and construction and relate that to other areas of theatre.

**Transfer**

"How can we apply what we have learned about research and status to areas outside of theatre?"

Possible answers include:

- Research papers in other classes
- Designing a poster that will communicate most effectively to an audience
- Presentation skills at a job

**Near Transfer**

"How can we apply what we have learned about research and status to other parts of theatre?"

Possible answers include:

- Designing for any element of tech
- Directors need to research the context of the status relationships of their show
- Actors need to research parts of the script that they are unfamiliar with.

"Great job today everyone! You guys did great! Next class we are going to play with more games and character movements together and after that we will start rehearsal for our final show. Have a great day!"

**Modifications for Special Needs:**

Computers will be equipped with resources to assist special needs students. For students that have trouble reading, more research time will be provided.

**Supplemental Materials:**

Copy of *The Improv Handbook*.

## Lesson 5 - Putting it All Together

**Today we will:** Students will practice and perform Improvisational comedy in a variety of scenario, scenes, and game devices that will demonstrate comprehension of characters, movement and improvisation techniques we have studied.

### Teaching Objectives:

- To prepare students for an improvisational performance.

### Student Objectives:

- Recall the rules of improv
- Combine the elements of improv to create strong scene work.
- Develop an understanding for the concept of movement and connect it to character development

### Essential Questions:

- 1) How was improvising as a character with no script different than performing with a script as you have done in the past?
- 2) Did you find improvising as a character easier or harder than improvising as yourself? Why?
- 3) Describe a scene you were a part of today; did it go well? Why or why not? What were your scene partners doing? Was the audience responsive?

## Learning Set

### Gain Attention

Upon entering the room, there will be various boxes at the front of the room and the students will be handed strips of paper. They will be instructed to write lines for "Random Lines," "Locations," and "Objects," and put them into the corresponding boxes.

### Review/State Prerequisite

"Before we start, what are some topics we have covered in this unit so far?"

Students will review what we have covered in the unit thus far while stretching.

"So far in this unit we have talked about the history of Improv, we practiced a myriad of games, scenarios and character motivation, we practiced how characters can move, and their relationships towards each other with regard to "Status." Today we are going to put all those pieces together by coming up with a set list and practicing the dynamics of actual performance. What are the rules of improv and what are the sub-rules of improv?"

Students will recall the rules of improv while stretching and warming up their bodies.

"Great! Now let's finish warming up then we will start with constructing our set list as a team."

### Advance Organizer

- 1) Discuss a possible show line-up. Discussing games that have worked in the past and ones that have not. Submitting mock lines, objects and location suggestions. (15 minutes)
- 2) Review of unit and improv rules and stretching (2 minutes)
- 3) Warmups (4 minutes)
- 4) Practice the show in its final format. (30 minutes)
- 5) Review of lesson and Standards (5 minutes)

## 2) Present Information

### Describe

After the review, warmups, and walking around the space, students will review the rules of improv and decide what kind of show they will be doing (approx. 30-45 mins in length). The students have all done these games/exercises in the past during previous improv classes. Today, try to "rehearse" some of these games and find what works and what does not in a performance format.

### Demonstrate

The class will go through several different exercises. Before each one, demonstrate what the rules look like normally then show students what it could look like with a Commedia character.

## Students Refine Learning

### Practice

Potential games from past classes to be incorporated into the show:

- “Big Booty”
- “Point at Things Game”
- “A Do-Run-Run”
- “Reverse Charades”
- “Super Heroes”
- “Party Quirks”
- “Press Conference”
- “YouTube Stars (Wigs/Hats)”
- “New Choice”
- “Go Through a Weird Door”

### Feedback

After deciding on the set list, have the class go through these games and practice them in a performance context. After each performance game, ask the class the following:

- How was that different from the other times you’ve done this game?
- Did you find it easier or harder to follow the rules of improv and “find the game?”
- Why easier/harder?
- As an audience member, what did you notice?

## Closure

### Summary

Have a discussion of how improv performances are different from other types of performances that students are familiar with. Review the standards.

### Transfer

“How can we apply what we have did today with improv to areas outside of theatre?”

Possible answers include:

- Trusting who you work with
- Making quick choices
- Going with the flow

### Near Transfer

“How can we apply what we did today to other forms theatre?”

Possible answers include:

- In a show if something goes wrong you might have to improvise to cover it up
- Long form/other improvisational forms
- Commedia dell’arte

“Great job today everyone! Next class we will be performing for an audience. Get some sleep and wear your uniforms!”

### Modifications for Special Needs:

Students who are behind in writing/reading or have learning disabilities will be given journal questions ahead of time.

### Supplemental Materials:

None

***Handouts and Supporting Materials  
can be found on the following pages.***

## Pre-Assessment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Improv Pre-Assessment

1) What are the three most important elements in improvisation? (2 points)

Choose the best answer. (1 point each)

2) Improvisation likely originated from which country?

- a. Germany
- b. Italy
- c. Poland
- d. France

3) Which game aids in developing conflict best?

- a. "When I Dream..."
- b. "Snake Oil"
- c. "Go Through a Weird Door."
- d. "Press Conference"

4) Which of the following is can be example of caricature?

- a. Going to work calmly
- b. Crying hysterically over spilled milk
- c. Taking a test and concentrating hard while doing so
- d. All of the above

Define and describe the following terms: (2 points each)

5) Scene

6) "First thought/Best Thought..."

7) Character Status

Describe how the following characters status relationships could be relative to each other. (2 points each)

8) Patient and Doctor

9) Captain of a whaling ship and his astronaut wife

Discuss how improvisational elements can be incorporated into other performance styles and how improv can enhance them. (5 points)

Total: \_\_\_\_/20

## Pre-Assessment Answer Key

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Improv Pre-Assessment Key

1) What are the three most important elements in improvisation? (2 points)

Base Reality

“First Thought/Best Thought...”

“Yes And...”

Choose the best answer. (1 point each)

2) Improvisation likely originated from which country?

a. Germany

b. Italy

c. Poland

d. France

3) Which game aids in developing conflict best?

a. “When I Dream...”

b. “Snake Oil”

c. “Go Through a Weird Door.”

d. “Press Conference”

4) Which of the following is can be example of caricature?

a. Going to work calmly

b. Crying hysterically over spilled milk

c. Taking a test and concentrating hard while doing so

d. All of the above

Define and describe the following terms: (2 points each)

5) Scene

The place that includes people(s), object(s), and event(s) in it;  
A place where character(s) make a specific impression

6) "First thought/Best Thought..."

The idea that the first unedited and uninhibited thought that occurs to the improvisational performer regarding a particular circumstance is the strongest to pursue in both quality of action and content.

7) Character Status

The classification, official or social, given to a character that determines a myriad of factors including rights, responsibilities, and pursuits.

Describe how the following characters status relationships could be relative to each other. (2 points each)

8) Patient and Doctor

\*Any answer that is related to status and properly justified by student\*

9) Captain of a whaling ship and his astronaut wife

\*Any answer that is related to status and properly justified by student\*

10) Discuss how improvisational elements can be incorporated into other performance styles and how improv can enhance them. (5 points).

\*Any example that is related to improv elements and performance incorporation being properly justified by student\*

Total: \_\_\_\_/20

## Post-Assessment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Improv Post-Assessment

1) What are the three most important elements in improvisation? (2 points)

Choose the best answer. (1 point each)

2) Improvisation likely originated from which country?

- a. Germany
- b. Italy
- c. Poland
- d. France

3) Which game aids in developing conflict best?

- a. "When I Dream..."
- b. "Snake Oil"
- c. "Go Through a Weird Door."
- d. "Press Conference"

4) Which of the following is can be example of caricature?

- a. Going to work calmly
- b. Crying hysterically over spilled milk
- c. Taking a test and concentrating hard while doing so
- d. All of the above

Define and describe the following terms: (2 points each)

5) Scene

6) "First thought/Best Thought..."

7) Character Status

Describe how the following characters status relationships could be relative to each other. (2 points each)

8) Patient and Doctor

9) Captain of a whaling ship and his astronaut wife

Discuss how improvisational elements can be incorporated into other performance styles and how improv can enhance them. (5 points)

Total: \_\_\_\_/20

## Post-Assessment Answer Key

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Improv Post-Assessment Key

1) What are the three most important elements in improvisation? (2 points)

Base Reality

“First Thought/Best Thought...”

“Yes And...”

Choose the best answer. (1 point each)

2) Improvisation likely originated from which country?

a. Germany

b. Italy

c. Poland

d. France

3) Which game aids in developing conflict best?

a. “When I Dream...”

b. “Snake Oil”

c. “Go Through a Weird Door.”

d. “Press Conference”

4) Which of the following is can be example of caricature?

a. Going to work calmly

b. Crying hysterically over spilled milk

c. Taking a test and concentrating hard while doing so

d. All of the above

Define and describe the following terms: (2 points each)

5) Scene

The place that includes people(s), object(s), and event(s) in it; A place where character(s) make a specific impression

6) "First thought/Best Thought..."

The idea that the first unedited and uninhibited thought that occurs to the improvisational performer regarding a particular circumstance is the strongest to pursue in both quality of action and content.

7) Character Status

The classification, official or social, given to a character that determines a myriad of factors including rights, responsibilities, and pursuits.

Describe how the following characters status relationships could be relative to each other. (2 points each)

8) Patient and Doctor

\*Any answer that is related to status and properly justified by student\*

9) Captain of a whaling ship and his astronaut wife

\*Any answer that is related to status and properly justified by student\*

Discuss how improvisational elements can be incorporated into other performance styles and how improv can enhance them. (5 points)

\*Any example that is related to improv elements and performance incorporation being properly justified by student\*

## Post-Unit Self-Reflection

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Improv Self-Reflection

- 1) Describe an improv character you portrayed that is memorable to you in one of your scenes. How did they move, speak, and interact with the other characters? What motivated their actions in your mind? (5 points)
  
- 2) What went well in your performance? What was challenging about your performance or rehearsal process? How did you overcome these challenges? (4 points)
  
- 3) If you were to perform with a different troupe in the future, what would you do differently? (3 points)
  
- 4) What was your favorite part of this unit? How will that element help you grow as either an actor or technician/designer? (3 points)

Total: \_\_\_\_/35

## Post-Unit Self-Reflection Key

### Improv Self-Reflection Grading Key

- 1) Describe an improv character you portrayed that is memorable to you in one of your scenes. How did they move, speak, and interact with the other characters? What motivated their actions in your mind? (5 points)

Full points rewarded if movement, speech, and relationships are all addressed. Motivations should also be described.

- 2) What went well in your performance? What was challenging about your performance or rehearsal process? How did you overcome these challenges? (4 points)

Full points for addressing one positive aspect of performance and for addressing one challenge and its solution.

- 3) If you were to perform with a different troupe in the future, what would you do differently? (3 points)

Any idea or suggestion that the student feels would improve their performance.

- 4) What was your favorite part of this unit? How will that element help you grow as either an actor or technician/designer? (3 points)

Any answer accepted as long as it is justified.

Total: \_\_\_\_/35

# Performance Rubric

## Introduction to Improvisational Concepts

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Exercise \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Improv Team group score</b></p> <p>____/10</p>	<p><b>Unsatisfactory</b> No scene(s) performed. 0-2</p>	<p><b>Making Progress</b> Scenes performed, little effort, with little to no concepts implemented (missing character, movement, etc.) 3-6</p>	<p><b>Good</b> Clear plot line in scenes, most elements present 7-8</p>	<p><b>Excellent</b> Clear plot line in scenes, improv concepts clear and understood 9-10</p>
<p><b>Preparation and Rehearsal</b></p> <p>____/10</p>	<p><b>Unsatisfactory</b> No evidence of active preparation. Student did not utilize rehearsal time. 0-2</p>	<p><b>Making Progress</b> Some evidence of preparation. Student utilized some rehearsal time. 3-6</p>	<p><b>Good</b> Scenes are approached with practice and student utilized most of rehearsal time effectively. 7-8</p>	<p><b>Excellent</b> Scenes are well presented and confident. Student utilized all of rehearsal time effectively. 9-10</p>
<p><b>Research</b></p> <p>____/10</p>	<p><b>Unsatisfactory</b> No research. No presentation. 0-2</p>	<p><b>Making Progress</b> Images present but not fitting for desired assignment, little research to justify choices 3-6</p>	<p><b>Good</b> Images present and fitting of assignment, some research to justify choices 7-8</p>	<p><b>Excellent</b> Images present and fitting of assignment, research effectively used to justify choices 9-10</p>
<p><b>Character</b></p> <p>____/10</p>	<p><b>Unsatisfactory</b> There is no attempt at character movement or physicality 0-2</p>	<p><b>Making Progress</b> There is movement and physicality of character present for less than half performance 3-6</p>	<p><b>Good</b> There is movement and physicality of character present for more than half of performance 7-8</p>	<p><b>Excellent</b> There is movement and physicality of character present throughout the entire performance 9-10</p>

**Total: \_\_\_\_\_/40**