Connecting Through Spontaneous Play:
A Guide to Leading Music and Theatre Improvisation Games for Teens

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What's in this guide?

Improvisation Games are a great way to build trust and community, develop creativity, and have a lot of fun. We wrote this guide from our own experience, and we hope that it will be of practical use to other people who want to develop and lead improvisation workshops. Our approach combined theatre improvisation games with musical improvisation; we borrowed ideas from a lot of great sources (which we've done our best to cite here), and we made up many of our own. Feel free to use the ideas in this guide; you'll find lots of additional ideas by following up the resources we list.

Inside you'll find:

- Our story
- Practical tips for giving improvisation workshops
- Musical Improvisation Games
- Theatre Improvisation Games
- Workshop Plan Template
- A list of sources for the improvisation games we used
- Appendices A-E are individual 2-hour workshop plans created by University of Guelph music students.

In the winter of 2010, a group of music students and their professors from the School of Fine Art and Music at the University of Guelph developed a series of improvisation workshops to offer at a teen drop-in night. The course was linked with the Improvisation, Community and Social Practice (ICASP) research project [hyperlink improvcommunity.ca] and their community partner, Onward Willow – Better Beginnings, Better Futures [hyperlink http://www.onwardwillowbetterbeginnings.ca]. Dr. Ellen Waterman, a musical improviser, and Dr. Rebecca Caines, a theatre improviser, were the course facilitators. Sarah Clark, Adam Malcolm, Khuong Pham, Maeve O'Sullivan, Matthew Saayman, and Claire Whitehead were the music students. We had a lot of help from the staff and volunteers at Onward Willow, especially youth and teen worker Alisa Fiorino. But it was the dynamic young people who attended the Friday night teen drop-in whose energy and creativity made the experience tons of fun. Each Friday, we became a community of people laughing together and learning from one another.

Our Story

Improvisation Games was a new venture into a community setting, putting University of Guelph students into the role of workshop facilitators for a lively and fluctuating group of teenagers at Onward Willow. The workshops were designed to encourage teens to actively participate in improvisation games that are either theatre or music-based. We wanted to help teens to express themselves, work cooperatively, and simply have fun. As facilitators, we gained experience leading workshops and we got to do improvisation activities that we may not have experienced in university music classes. In fact, since none of us (except Rebecca) had any experience in theatre, many of the improvisation games were as new to us as they were to the teens at Onward Willow.

Our project lasted for 10 weeks. The first 5 classes were rehearsals held once a week at the University in which we actively played improvisation games that seemed appropriate to bring to the workshops: warm-ups, name games, large and small group games, classic theatre games and experiments with musical ideas. The importance of doing these games ourselves was to learn how effective the games are. We learned, by doing, what forms of improvisation could be used to develop skills or encourage certain kinds of cooperation and individual expression. As a very simple example, we realized from playing group circle games that this strategy is effective in allowing everyone to observe what's happening and thus to feel included. As music students who play flute, violins, keyboards and guitars, we also decided to incorporate our instruments into some existing and new games. For example, sometimes we formed "the band" to provide a soundtrack for story telling games. In our rehearsals we got a chance to talk about each game we had just played and make collective decisions about what games to include. Each one of us created a two-hour workshop plan that expressed our various interests. Adam, for example, was keen to help teens to develop their musical skills, while Claire

stated that the "flow" of her workshop "is based on creating a sense of inclusion and accessibility for less socially comfortable people" (workshop plan). Five student workshop plans are included in this guide.

The next five sessions took place at Onward Willow as workshops; each one was led by a two-member team from our class. The first workshop was led by Rebecca and Ellen. We began with a short musical improvised jam session to announce our arrival and then moved on to theatre and music games. Student teams led the succeeding workshops, adapting our workshop plans to suit the reality of the Onward Willow context. Soon after the first student-led session, through class discussions held before and after the workshops, we decided as a class that the best format for each workshop was to bypass a musical jam at the beginning, and jump right into improvisation games and play them for the first hour; then the second hour was to be reserved for open and optional workshops where the kids could play the instruments that we brought.

It was with through these two phases (both the group game activities with everyone and the small, optional musical instrument workshops) that we learned the integral, unavoidable, and beneficial nature of socialization through improvisation activities. Some teens loved the raucous large group games where people are rapidly changing identities, making loud music, and laughing at all the antics. Other teens seemed to gravitate towards the one-on-one opportunities in the informal second half where they could try out a violin, learn to blow a flute, or gather around the keyboard for improvised song writing. Alisa, the Onward Willow youth and teen worker, reported that many teens in their neighbourhood don't have access to music lessons or instruments. She also observed that, for some youth with behavioural issues, the workshops provided a sustained fascination that encouraged them to participate in group activity for the first time.

For our part, we learned valuable lessons about communicating musical ideas to teens, often finding that just listening and hanging out was more important than trying to be "teachers". Improvisation happened not only when we were playing games, but in the subtle and always shifting dynamics of conversation, playing music, and seeing/ hearing each other's achievements.

We learned a lot about handling group dynamics. We tried to quickly adapt to each personality in the group (a difficult challenge since the group was often 30 participants). Improvisation activities are meant to encourage individual creativity, but each person has a different way of expressing their ideas. How could we best encourage each person's creative expression? It soon became clear that the best way to facilitate a comfortable space for many different kinds of people to improvise in is to "change up" the games frequently. As we learned in our rehearsals, each game has a different function, for example, some games are meant for all participants to act a similar way at the same time while others are meant for individuals to jump in and present a "solo" expression while others watch. We observed how some participants did not contribute

to certain games that required a specific form of expression. A shy person may not feel comfortable jumping into the middle of a circle to take on a character role, but they may really enjoy being part of a group activity like an impromptu choir. Games that involve both audience and participants are great for the introspective person who just likes to observe. Sensitive changes to games, then, help encourage participants to improvise.

The ordinary music classroom cannot easily accommodate the needs of differing personalities and types of behaviour, and the advantage of improvisation games is that they are both adaptable and diverse. However, the improvisation setting, like a school classroom, is affected by dynamics of gender, cultural background, language, and age. We needed to respect both the opportunity that the games offered to some high-energy teens to really "let go" while working to make space for the person who needs a bit more time to decide to join in. Asking for volunteers is not always the best strategy, and we learned to balance this with encouraging specific people to participate. Our goal was to find ways to include and respect everyone, and to do this at each person's level. Since we were an integral part of the group, that also meant recognizing our own tastes, expectations, and limitations.

Working in small groups or one-on-one playing instruments was a different experience of developing improvisation skills. When teens came to the second half of the workshops in order to try out our instruments, many of them wanted to learn how to play a specific song. We became improvisers in our efforts to teach people who have diverse backgrounds and experience. In discussions after the workshops many of us commented on how we were learning how to teach our instruments "in the moment". We discovered that we had to continually apply new strategies for teaching, since each teen approached the instrument differently. Interacting with new people forced us to discover new ways of using our own instruments.

Finally, the one-on-one discovery of instruments and the whole-group games created new connections between music and social interactions for both us and the workshop participants. At the end of the very last workshop, everyone did a final activity called "I remember" in which each person had to state and try to act out their favourite memory from the workshops.   This activity encouraged reflection on both improvisation and social interaction. One teen remembered being taught how to play a simple tune on the violin, another recalled a particularly funny scene, while another liked the time we improvised a song around the piano by using each person's name. It became clear that each one of us built memories out of our social connections and experiences while improvising – memories that may be called upon to activate new improvisations with new individuals in the future.

Practical Tips

This section tells you some of the practical things we learned about planning and delivering effective workshops with youth at a community centre.

BEFORE THE WORKSHOPS

- **Collaborate in planning**.   Meet with the staff of the community organization before beginning to plan your workshops. It's important to make sure that you are not imposing an idea on an organization, but rather providing something they think is valuable and interesting to their clients.

- **Know the organization.** Take a tour of the facility and find out about its mandate and its rules. What kind of space will you be allowed to use? Will there be staff or other volunteers present to help? How will discipline issues be dealt with? What are the protocols for interacting with youth? What are your responsibilities as volunteers? What resources do they have, and what will you need to bring (for example snacks, instruments, sound equipment). How will participants be selected? For example, will they sign up in advance or simply 'drop-in' to the activity? What are the protocols for gaining informed consent (in case you are planning to document the workshops or hold follow-up interviews, for example).

- **Volunteer checks**. Community organizations usually require that volunteers undergo a police volunteer check – this can take 6 to 8 weeks, and you may not be allowed to begin your workshops until you can provide a certificate. There may be a small fee for this service.

- **Research ethics board.** Although we weren't "doing research," all Canadian universities require that any student or faculty member working with "human subjects" complete a research ethics board application. Again, this can take several weeks to clear, so do it well in advance.

DURING YOUR WORKSHOPS

- **Be a role model.** At our teen drop-in night there were always several regular volunteers who also played the improvisation games. They acted as role models for teens' behaviour, and helped make participants feel more comfortable with this unusual activity. We were also encouraged to act as role models: to participate and cooperate, rather than 'police' the group.

- **Chaos vs. Control.** Allowing a certain degree of chaos provides an open environment for creative expression. On the other hand, too much crazy noise makes it impossible for people to understand instructions and can be overwhelming. Redirecting attention, changing up the game, providing contrasting activities (noisy, then super quiet) helps to keep peoples' attention.

- **Be prepared.** Our rehearsal process made us all feel more confident in demonstrating the games. Know what your goals are, and prepare a good specific outline for your workshop – even if you end up changing the plan during the workshop, it's great to have something to fall back on!

- **Communicate.** If you are running a series of workshops, stay in regular touch with the staff of the organization. What is working, what needs to be changed? What suggestions do they have for adapting your activities to the particular needs of their clients? Staff, regular volunteers, and parents can be great resources! Listen and respect the feedback you get from the organization.

- **Demonstrate rather than explain.** Long explanations take time and lose people's interest. Demonstrating the game is often more effective.

- **Adapt.** Although we had to adapt our workshop plans every time, it was really helpful to have many possible games prepared since it was hard to know how fast we'd run through each activity. Depending on the size of the group, their energy, the weather – many factors! – we found we had to adapt our choices every time.

- **Include the participants.** Encouraging participants to suggest new activities or to define the content of games includes them fully in the workshop.

- **Be sensitive.** Make sure that you are alert to people's differing reactions; play games that allow for a variety of ways to join in. Remember that participating means different things: for some it is observation, for others it is action. But that quiet person in the background may be waiting for an invitation to join in. Be aware of gender and cultural dynamics, and differing levels of ability, and work with the staff to adjust to individual people's needs. Above all, treat each person with respect.

- **Share.** We found that sharing our instruments and bringing some extra ones was much appreciated. Participants were very respectful of our stuff.

- **Warm up.** Always begin with stretches and some physical movement. It's also useful to play one or two name games or other warm-up games to loosen people up. (See ideas below)

Musical Improvisation Games

Here is a selection of the musical games we rehearsed and played at Onward Willow. We've provided a short description and then cited the source to the best of our knowledge. Since many games are passed on from one improviser to another, often changing shape along the way, we may have made some mistakes in attribution! Please let us know if you have a correction by contacting www.improvcommunity.ca. You can also find many more improvisation activities at this site under *Improvisation Tool Kit.*

Warm Up Games
- Vocal Warmup- Humming, singing, facial warmups: Ask the group to warm up their voices by humming for a few minutes. Ask them to breathe when they need to. Ask them to hum louder and softer. Ask them to open their mouths and sing a single note or a few vowel sounds. Get them to massage their faces. Get them to pretend they are chewing a piece of gum that is getting bigger and bigger and harder to chew. After a few seconds get them to pretend to spit the gum over their shoulder as far as they can.

- Imitate My Name: You can play this warm-up game in several variations to help a group become familiar with each other and to overcome shyness about using the voice. This game works best when everyone stands in a circle; keep it moving fast and help people out. There will be lots of laughter as people invent ever sillier expressions and strive to remember what went before.

  Version 1 (Simon Says): One at a time, someone says or sings their name in an exaggerated or silly way. The whole group imitates them. Do this until everyone has had a turn. Encourage people to listen carefully and imitate as exactly as possible.

  Version 2 (Daisy Chain): Person one says or sings their name; person two imitates person one as precisely as possible and then says or sings their own name; person three imitates person two as precisely as possible then says or sings their own name, etc. Continue until the circle is complete.

Version 3 (Memory): Person one says or sings their name; person two imitates person one and then adds their own name; person three imitates person one and two, then adds their own name, etc. Continue until the circle is complete.

Version 4 (Add Actions): This can be used with any of the previous versions. Simply add an action when you say your name.   This is both an aid to memory, and a good way of loosening people up.

- Music/dance name-game: Organize the group into two lines facing each other. One person at the beginning of the line asks the person across from them "hi, what's your name?" and then starts making a sound (silly, musical, rhythmic) and the person across from them answers their name while doing a dance-move to that sound. This would be really fun with instruments, but voices or rhythm making on bodies will work fine. This game will be good not only as a name-game, but as a way to get people thinking and almost performing on their feet. As well, I imagine it might create some laughs. [Contributed by Claire Whitehead]

    Source for warm-up games: These are all variations on common warm up games.

Large Group Games
> 10 people (groups above 25 people should consider splitting into two groups with a leader for each to explain the games). Some of these games are played in a circle, others have an audience and small groups are chosen to perform the game for the audience.

Typewriter (Musical): Split everyone into two teams, or choose 2 groups of 4 to demonstrate. Choose an additional "director" for the musical production. The role of the director is to narrate and/or "type out" a story (it can be an existing story or one they create on the spot). Team 1 acts out the scene while team 2 provides musical accompaniment on instruments or with voices. The scene should last just a few minutes. When the director shouts "FREEZE!" both teams swap roles, so that team 2 is now acting, and team 1 is providing musical accompaniment. However, team 2 must take on the roles of the existing characters.

Source: Based on the Theatresports © game "Typewriter" devised by Keith Johnstone. See http://www.theatresports.org/ for information on Theatresports including licensing for hosting competitions.

 Keith Johnstone. *Don't be Prepared: Theatresports for Teachers*. Volume One. Calgary: Loose Moose Theatre Company, 1994. 74-78.

- Orchestra: Groups of two or three are created. One participant is the conductor. Using only voices and other body sounds, each group creates an "instrument" (e.g. percussion sounds, brass section, an animal sound, a machine noise – there's no limit). The conductor will lead the "orchestra", using cues such as "louder", "softer", "stop" and so on to create an improvisation.   Take the time to teach some simple hand cues, and switch conductors often.

  Source: Based on the game "Orchestration" by Viola Spolin. Viola Spolin. *Improvisation for the Theater: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques*. Northwestern University Press: Illinois. 1963. 220.

  See also Viola Spolin, *Theater Game File.* Illinois*:* Northwestern University Press: 1989. (Includes index cards of games and a handbook). The electronic version is also available on CD-ROM. For more information on Spolin's influential work, see http://www.spolin.com.

- Krazy Choir: One person is chosen to be the conductor. The conductor then asks everyone to choose a song of their choice. Give everyone the same starting note and then conduct the group note by note – the resulting sonorities are amazing even though everyone is simultaneously singing a different song! It is helpful for the conductor to review all cues he or she plans to use so all participants understand; and a demonstration is definitely helpful. Variation: Divide the entire group into two teams, so there are two choirs and two conductors. Have each team take turns being audience or performers.

  [Contributed by Ellen Waterman] Source: Christine Duncan, director of the Element Choir. For more information about this extraordinary vocal improviser see http://www.barnyardrecords.com/bio%20christine.html)

- Send and Receive: This is a game that encourages close listening and concentration. It works best when everyone stands in a circle with their eyes closed. Each person may choose to be either a sender or a receiver (and can change roles at any time during the game). To send a sound, make a repeating sound and direct it towards a specific part of the circle; e.g. 'beep beep beep beep beep beep'. To receive a sound, simply listen. When you feel like a sound is being 'sent' to you, then repeat it immediately and direct it to a different part of the circle.   If you are sending a sound, stop as soon as you hear that it has been received. You can direct a sound by turning your head or taking a step out into the circle. Anyone can decide to become a 'sender' at any time and introduce a

new sound into the game. The object of this game is to keep the sounds circulating, and also to explore the directionality of sound.
[Contributed by Ellen Waterman.]

Source: Inspired by Pauline Oliveros, "Sonic Meditation III-Telepathic Improvisation," *Sonic Meditations* (Baltimore, Maryland: Smith Publications, 1971)]

- Improvised Name Jam: What you need: any available instruments, noise makers, and voices. Invite everyone to come together and improvise a song based on people's names. If people are new to improvising, it may be helpful to have someone play a simple chord progression, such as a 12-bar blues or 'chopsticks'. More comfortable improvisers can easily make up a counter melody to embellish the chord progression or add a beat (can be done with clapping and tapping if no drums are available). Once you have a groove established, make up verses based on each person's name – the sillier the better! Encourage positive descriptions of the people in the group. [Contributed by University of Guelph Music Students]

Small Group Games < 10 people in each group

- Soundscapes: This works best with teams of 5 or 6 people. Give each group one minute to agree on a soundscape they want to create (e.g. a carnival, the doctor's office, a coffee shop). Each group gets to stand up and perform their soundscape for everyone, using only sounds not actions. Sounds may include anything you would find in that location; for example, a doctor's office might have phones ringing, a nurse announcing the next patient, people coughing or moaning, a baby crying etc. Audience members put up their hands when they have guessed the location of the soundscape. If you play a second round, encourage each group to think about things like the density of sounds, which ones are in the foreground, middle ground, background. Make the soundscape as realistic as possible. [Contributed by University of Guelph Music Students]

- Collaborative Story Graphic Score: Materials needed: a white board, black board, or sheets of paper; markers or chalk. Working together, the group creates a musical score made out of pictures that tell a story. Each person draws part of the story on the board or paper, and the finished picture becomes the score for

an improvised piece of music. Divide the group into small ensembles of 3 to 5 people. Have each ensemble "play the story" using voices and instruments. It may be helpful to begin by suggesting a basic plotline; e.g. going on a hike. Since stories have their high and low points with greater and lesser amounts of action, this kind of score is a great way to get people thinking about contrasting dynamics, densities, and qualities of sounds. Have more than one small group play the score and then compare the different interpretations. [Contributed by University of Guelph Music Students.]

Source: inspired by R. Murray Schafer's Ear Cleaning exercises in *The Thinking Ear*. Indian River, ON: Arcana, 1986.

- Musical Character Cards: What you need: create a set of "musical character cards". On each one, put a brief character description (hint: it's helpful to include a picture). Examples: Batman, a horse, a baby, Martian etc.

  Directions: Each person chooses a card to act out using only sounds. Everyone tries to guess the character. [Contributed by University of Guelph Music Students]

Theatre Improvisation Games

Some of these games are of our own invention, some are classic games from well-known sources, and others are so common that nobody quite knows where they originated (but if you do, please contact us at www.improvcommunity.ca). A few theatre games may also cross over into the category of music games. Small Group games may be done in a Large Group setting, either by dividing the large group into smaller groups, or by having only a few people participate at a time while the others observe.

Warm-up Games
- Group circle body stretches: Have everyone stand in a circle. Ask each person in turn to demonstrate a stretch, shake or other warm up of a body part. E.g. Leg or arm stretch, face rub, touch your toes, wriggle your fingers. Ask everyone in the whole circle to do the stretch for themselves. Move on to the next person until everyone has contributed a stretch and everyone has warmed up all of their bodies. Encourage people to keep thinking of new parts of the body that can be stretched/warmed up. [Created by Rebecca Caines based on common warm-up games]

- Counting down from 10: Have everyone stand in a very close circle, shoulder to shoulder. Ask everyone to put their left hand into the circle. Ask them to count

softly and quickly from 10 down to 1, as a group, whilst shaking their left hand. Swiftly get them to swap (together) to the right hand, then left leg and then right leg, repeating the counting. Start again with the left hand, but this time count from 9 down to 1, and to count a little louder. Repeat countdowns, each time returning to the left hand with a lower number and each time getting louder. By the time you have reached 1, the group should be shouting and moving very quickly.

Contributed by: Rebecca Caines

Source: This is one of those exercises that one encounters over and over in so many different settings that it is difficult to say who first created it. If you know, please contact us!

- Tag Games-Hug Tag: Choose 1 person to be it. This person must chase and catch other people by touching them. People may avoid being caught by hugging one other person (both arms must touch the other person). When 2 people are hugging the person who is chasing can start counting down from 5. They must separate by the time they reach 1. People should go from hug to hug to avoid being caught and should "save" each other when they see someone is about to be caught. Once someone is caught, they become the chaser.

- Tag Games-Sticky Tag: Choose 1 person to be it. This person must chase and catch other people by touching them with one hand. Once they catch someone, that person is "stuck" to the chaser by that hand, and must run around with them catching people with their free hand, until everyone has been caught and "stuck". The line of people that forms must stay "stuck" to each other and work together to catch people.

- Tag Games- Clap Tag: Choose 1 person to be it. Ask half the group to stand around the edges of the room as watchers to make sure no one runs into anything. The remaining group and the person that is it must close their eyes and keep them closed. The person that is it should clap and the rest of the group must clap back. Based on the sound, the person who is it must try to move around the room and catch people. Once they are caught they move to the side to join the rest of the watchers.

Contributed by: Rebecca Caines

Source: All three tag exercises (above) are also encountered over and over in so many different settings that it is difficult to say who first created them. If you know, please contact us!

- Vocal Warmup- Tongue Twisters: Get the group to repeat or suggest tongue twisters. Common ones include: "A proper cup of coffee from a proper copper coffee pot". "Red leather, yellow leather". "Around the rugged rocks, the ragged rascal ran". "She sells sea shells by the sea shore". "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?". "I know you need unique New York, but does unique New York need you?" "Antithesis to synthesis, the symbience is transient, yet ultimately radiant". "Toy boat, toy boat, toy boat, toy boat".

  Source: this is a common warm-up game.

Focus Games
- Sending a clap around the circle: Ask everyone to stand in a circle. Send the clap from person to person around the circle, ensuring no gap between claps. Get faster and faster and ask people to point at the person next to them as they clap their hands. Switch directions. Allow people to direct their clap across the circle (they must point it at someone so it is clear who it is going to).

- Murder Wink: Ask everyone to close their eyes. While all eyes are closed, secretly tap 1 person on the shoulder. Ask everyone to open their eyes and explain that you have tapped the "murderer" on the shoulder. Get everyone to walk around in a close group or form a circle. The "murderer" must wink at people, trying to ensure no one but the victim sees the wink. When winked at, the person must die a dramatic death and fall to the floor. The murderer must try to murder as many people as possible before being caught.

- Yes Game: Ask everyone to stand in a circle and not speak. Choose 1 participant to start. Ask this person to look across the circle at someone and make eye contact with someone else and point at them. The person pointed at must say "yes" and this allows the original participant to start walking towards them. They must in turn choose someone else across the circle to make eye contact with and point at. They must wait until this person says "yes" before they can start walking. Participants may have to walk very slowly so as to not reach the other side of the circle until the person has moved away. Variations: *Silent Yes Game*: Once the group is quiet and concentrating, ask them to stop pointing and saying "yes", instead people just nod to give permission to start walking (instead of

saying "yes") and make eye contact to establish the connection across the circle (instead of pointing).

Source: All three focus exercises (above) are also encountered over and over in so many different settings that it is difficult to say who first created them. If you know, please contact us!

- Bippity Bippity Bop: *Phase 1*. Ask participants to form a circle. Choose 1 participant to be in the centre. They must turn and point at someone in the circle and say "bippity bippity bop". Before they reach the end of the phrase the person in the circle must say "Bop". The person in the centre then continues to try to catch people out by suddenly pointing at them. They can also choose to point and say "Bop" instead, in which case the person must not answer. This must be fast and loud. If the person pointed at fails to say the correct answer or stay silent when required, they take the place of the person in the centre. Phase 2: Once participants are working well with Phase 1 then teach Phase 2. In *Phase 2* the bippity bippity bop continues, with an added feature, shapes. Teach the group a number of 3 person shapes they must make with the person either side of them in the circle. 3 examples are "Elephant" (the person in the centre of the group of three puts their right arm over their left and holds their nose with their left hand to make a trunk. The person either side uses both arms to make large ear shapes on the sides of the person in the centre), "Koala" (the person in the centre of the group of three covers their nose with both hands, the person either side uses their hand to make small cups on the centre persons head as ears) or "Surfing" (the person in the centre pretends to surf, standing sideways with arms out, the person either side faces the centre and waves up and down with their hands). Once the group know how to make these shapes (these are only a few examples, groups can make up their own), then the person in the middle of the circle can choose to point at someone and choose a shape. They must count down out loud from 5 and the person pointed at, along with the person either side of them in the circle must make the shape. If anyone fails they take the place of the person in the middle of the circle. This takes place along with the Phase 1 of the game so that the circle will not know whether they are going to be asked to say "Bop", stay silent, or make a shape at any point.

  Source: "Bippity, Bippity, Bop", by The Second City (theatre group). For more information on this influential improvisation group, see http:// www.secondcity.com/

Katherine Mcknight and Mary Scruggs. *The Second City Guide to Improv in the Classroom: Grades K-8: Using Improvisation to Teach Skills and Boost Learning*. San Francisco and Chicago: Jossey-Bass and The Second City, 2008. 56.

- <u>Walking Different Ways:</u> Get the group to walk around the room, not talking or making eye contact. (A good way to stop collisions is to ask them to keep finding a space on the floor to walk into). Ask them to walk in a hurry, stop suddenly at traffic lights or the edge of a cliff, walk as if they were happy, sad, angry, heavy, light, bored, an alien, avoiding traps, swimming through custard, on the moon etc. Ask them to walk with their eyes closed (slowly, exploring the space). Ask them to crawl, slither, walk on their toes, dance, run. Count slowly from 1-10.Get them to walk slowly at count of 1, through to running at count of 10. Start to say different numbers between 1 and 10 and ask them to return to that speed immediately when you say the number. Returning to silent walking and stopping can return focus if people start talking. [Created by Rebecca Caines based on common warm-up games]

Large Group Games

- <u>Objects:</u> Ask participants to form a circle. Take an actual object (a piece of clothing is easiest. E.g. A shoe). Place the object in the centre on the floor. Ask participants to run into the centre one at a time and pick up the object. Ask them to say "This is not a shoe, this is a [insert new object here]". They choose what the object could be off the top of their head, and name what it can be used for and demonstrate for the group. They then put the object back and rejoin the circle. E.g. "This is not a shoe, this is a boat" (demonstrates sitting on it and rowing). This can be voluntary or the leader can choose who will go in next. Variations: *More than One Object*: Add extra objects, participants must use all of them. E.g. This is not a shoe and a jacket, this is my cup and plate (demonstrates eating). *Objects and People:* Once someone has run into the circle and demonstrated a new use for the object, ask someone else to run in and change it again and both people demonstrate the new use. Eg. First person: "This is not a shoe, it is a shovel and I am digging."(Demonstrates digging). Second Person, "That is not a shovel it is a pizza and we are fighting over it" (both people demonstrate fighting over the pizza).

  Source: Based on the Theatresports © game "Most Uses Of An Object," devised by Keith Johnstone.

Keith Johnstone. *Don't be Prepared: Theatresports for Teachers*. Volume One. Calgary: Loose Moose Theatre Company. 1994. 116.

- <u>Silent Story</u>: Ask participants to form a circle. Ask one person to make a silent motion. E.g. 1: Dropping something. Ask the next person to their right to make a silent motion in reaction to that one. E.g. 2: Picking it up and using it. Continue around the circle. A "silent story" is made through silent actions and reactions around the circle. [Created by University of Guelph Music Students]

  <u>Leaving for a Reason</u>: Ask participants to start moving around the room. Give them a situation or location that they are part of and ask them to act it out E.g. 1: Everyone is in a library. Ask everyone to find and act out a different reason to leave one by one. This reason should make sense in the context of the scene. E.g. 2: Acting out forgetting their books, noticing it is closing time, getting a phone call etc. The game goes on until everyone has "left" the scene.

  <u>Source: Based on </u>the Theatresports © game "Leave for the Same Reason", devised by Keith Johnstone.

Keith Jonstone. *Improv for Storytellers*. New York: Faber and Faber, 199. 169-170.

- <u>Clerk and Customer</u>: Choose 2 participants. Choose one to be the clerk of a store and the other to be a customer returning an object. Ask the "customer" to leave the room for a minute. Ask the audience and the "clerk" decide what product the customer should be returning. Ask the customer to return to the room and to enter the scene acting as if they are returning some sort of item to the shop. The clerk has to give them hints as to what the item is by asking questions about why they are returning it. The aim of the game is for the customer to guess what it is they are returning based on the clues given to them in the scene. [Contributed by Claire Whitehead]

- <u>Statues</u>: Divide the group into pairs. Ask each pair to choose who will be the sculptor and who will be the statue. The sculptor "moulds" the body of the statue into positions. The statue acts pliable and holds the positions they are moved into. Leaders can allocate emotions or scenarios to each pair and the statues must reflect that emotion or scenario, or they can let the pairs choose their own positions. Allow time for the group to see each others' statues. Switch over sculptor and statue and repeat. Variations: *Statue Pictures.* Move the completed statues into one group in the centre of the room, and ask the sculptors and audience to suggest a group scene that they could be part of based

on the positions they are all in. Based on the suggestions ask the sculptors to move the statues around to new places/combinations to emphasise this scene. [Contributor: University of Guelph Music Students]

Source: Another exercise encountered over and over in so many different settings that it is difficult to say who first created them. If you know, please contact us!

Name Cards: Some name cards will need to be prepared in advance for this activity. Ask all the participants to pick a card from the pile. On each card there is a character briefly outlined including their distinctive characteristics and motivations. These characters can be famous characters or just people with distinctive traits or situations. Ask them to act out their new identity silently, interacting with others and their new identities. When the leader says "stop," everyone should try to guess what the other people's characters were like (or who they were in the case of famous characters). [Created by University of Guelph Music Students]

Yes, and: Choose 2 participants. Ask one to be the Questioner and the other to be the Answerer. Ask the Questioner to start asking questions about the scene that the Answerer could potentially answer with a yes or no. The Answerer must answer every question with "Yes, and…", accepting the offer for what can happen in the scene and building off it to develop the story. Both characters must act out the scene as it develops and should try to keep it going as long as possible. E.g. Question: "Is that a tiger?" Answer: "Yes, and it is very hungry."

Yes, but: Choose 2 participants. Ask one to be the Questioner and the other to be the Answerer. Ask the Questioner to start asking questions about the scene that the Answerer could potentially answer with a yes or no. The Answerer must answer every question with "Yes, but…" inserting any excuse to try and block the scene from going further, whilst also making up more details on the spot about what is going on. The questions should build off each other to let you know what is happening. E.g. Question: "Are you Open". Answer: "Yes, but we have a power cut and you won't be able to see much". Question: "Are you alone in the shop". Answer: "Yes, but my pet alligator is with me". Ask them to try to keep the scene going as long as possible and to act it out as they go along. Variation: *Audience led Yes, But.* In this version choose one participant to stand in front of the audience, and ask the audience to ask them any questions they like. The participant must start every answer with "Yes, but…" no matter what the question is.

Source: "Yes, and" and Yes, but" are variations of the exercises in spontaneity and acceptance devised by Viola Spolin. Viola Spolin. *Improvisation for the Theater: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press. 1963.

They were named and popularised by:
Keith Johnstone. *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre*. London: Faber and Faber. 1979. 103

- <u>Gibberish/Past Incident:</u> Choose 2 participants. Ask them to act out a scene while speaking aloud in made up "gibberish". Scenarios can be given or left to the participants to choose. Choose 2 or more other participants. Ask them to simultaneously translate the gibberish into English for the audience as if they were onsite translators. The gibberish speakers should respond to the translations and shift their acting to either match the translation or be the exact opposite. Play a musical variation by having the 'translators' use instruments to improvise a musical interpretation of the gibberish.

Source: A variation of the exercise Gibberish #1, devised by Viola Spolin. Viola Spolin. *Improvisation for the Theater: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press. 1963. 123.

<u>Space Jump:</u> Ask the group to form a circle. Choose 1 participant and ask them to stand in the centre. Ask the audience to choose what action they should be doing and the participant should act this out. When they are in an interesting physical position, the leader calls "Space Jump" and the participant freezes in place. A second person goes into the circle, looks at the position the person is frozen in and chooses a different scene they could be in. Based on that position the 2 participants then act out this new scene and then the leader calls "Space Jump" again and a 3rd person joins in and changes the scene again. This continues until 5 people are acting out a scene in the centre. When "Space Jump" is called for the 6th time, the last person goes out of the circle and the group must revert back to the previous 4 person activitiy. They should justify why they were in the position they were frozen in. This continues until the first person is alone in the circle back where the scene started.

Source: Based on the "Freeze Tag" game series, popularised by Second City (US theatre group), Improv Olympic (US theatre group), Improcorp (Australian theatre group) and TV shows such as "Whose Line is it Anyway". For more

information about influential founders of Improv Olympic, Del Close and Charna Halpern see http://chicago.ioimprov.com/about/about.

For more information on the work of Lyn Pierse and Improcorp Australia, see http://www.improvisation.com.au/

Amy E. Seham.*Whose Improv is it Anyway: Beyond Second City.* Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi. 2001.42.

- Emotion Replay: Choose 4-5 participants to be actors. Choose 1 participant to be the director. Ask the audience or the participants to choose where the scene is and what is taking place. The scene should be very simple. The director then asks for the scene to be redone differently. Example: *"it should be sadder," or "it should be angrier," or "it should be underwater,"* etc. If there is a large group of participants present, four or five new actors may volunteer to "redo" the scene with the director's new instructions.

  Source: Based on the game "Emotional Changes", devised by Viola Spolin. Viola Spolin. *Improvisation for the Theater: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques* Illinoi:. Northwestern University Press. 1963. 24.

- Expert Double Figures/ The Arms Game: Select 4 participants to perform a scene. Sit two participants in chairs facing the audience. Sit the other two participants behind them on the floor hidden from view. The 2 players on the chairs place their arms behind their backs. The 2 players on the floor reach their arms around the person in front of them, keeping their bodies hidden. From the front it must look like the person's own arms. The players on the floor make all gestures for the players on the chair. Ask the audience to contribute where they are and what is happening in the scene, or give them an "interview" scenario where one player is interviewing the other. It is useful to get the players on the floor to imagine their arms are showing the thoughts behind what is being said. Eg. Player 1 is interviewing Player 2 about their explorations in African jungles. Player 1's arms are showing that he is interested in Player 2 by touching her knee etc., even if the questions he asks don't show this. Player 2's arms are showing that she is terribly itchy from bug bites from her journey by repeatedly scratching everywhere, even though her answers do not speak about this.

  Source: Based on the Theatresports © game "Expert Arms" devised by Keith Johnstone.

Keith Johnstone. *Don't be Prepared: Theatresports for Teachers*. Volume One. Calgary: Loose Moose Theatre Company. 1994. 105.

- Death in a Minute: Choose a group of 4-5 participants and 1 person to be timekeeper. Ask one person to leave the room. Ask the remaining participants and/or the audience to decide where the scene will be set and how the person outside will die in the scene. Ask one of the participants to bring in the person outside. The group must act out the scene and the person who was outside must join in without knowing what is happening. The scene must last exactly 1 minute. By 55 seconds the group must have manipulated the person into the situation where the planned death can take place. At 55 seconds the timekeeper begins a countdown out loud and the group must act the death out at exactly 60 seconds. Eg. Audience decides that the scene takes place in a library and that the person will die from a librarian hitting her with a ruler. Group must choose who plays which roles, and ensure the person realizes the library setting when she enters the room. The other actors must manipulate the person doing something to justify the person playing the librarian getting angry. At 55 seconds the Librarian must prepare to murder the person who dies by ruler at 60 seconds.

  Source: Based on the Theatresports © game "Death in a Minute" devised by Keith Johnstone.

  Keith Jonstone. *Don't be Prepared: Theatresports for Teachers*. Volume One. Calgary: Loose Moose Theatre Company. 1994. 67.

- Shadowing: Two teams of two players are created. Two of the players act out a scene together. The other two players act as the "shadows" of other players. They are to be the actors' consciences and to make comments or suggestions about what their partner is doing. This activity encourages creativity by including both passive and active improvisational roles.

  Source: A variation of the exercise "Shadowing", devised by Viola Spolin.

  Viola Spolin. *Improvisation for the Theater: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press. 1963. 177.

- Typewriter (Theatrical): Choose 1 participant to act out typing a short story on a "typewriter" while reading it aloud. Choose 4-8 participants to act out the story silently as it is read out loud. The story can either be a familiar one (like a fairy

tale) or can be completely new. See Typewriter (Musical) for the music based version of this game.

Source: Based on the Theatresports © game "Typewriter" devised by Keith Johnstone.

Keith Johnstone. *Don't be Prepared: Theatresports for Teachers*. Volume One. Calgary: Loose Moose Theatre Company. 1994. 74-78.

Small Group Games <10 people

- Shapes: Split participants into groups of 3-4. Give all of the groups a shape to make with their bodies and ask them to freeze in the shape. Eg. Letter A, Square, Circle, Heart. Let each group check out the other groups' shapes before moving on. Ensure that they see how differently the same shapes can be made by different people. Repeat making the shapes more complex and then move giving the groups generic places or situations to make with their bodies. Eg. Tree, church or temple, bus, school, rocket. [Created by Rebecca Caines based on common warm up exercises]

- Postcards: Split participants into groups of 4-5. Give all of the groups a location to make a frozen "postcard" for. Eg. Paris, Sydney, a hockey game, the local mall. Give them a short time to plan how to make a "picture" with their bodies, which would clearly represent that place like a postcard. Ask each group member to jump into the "picture" one at a time and announce what they are, before freezing in place. Ask participants to stay close to each other and face the audience when appropriate. When the group is in place, ask them to hold their freeze in place and then announce (together) "Welcome to….." the location. Variations: *Moving Postcards.* Follow the instructions for *Postcards*, but instead of freezing in place, ask each group member to jump into the picture and then perform a simple action to go with the scene, which is repeated until all the members are in place. E.g. Swinging a bat, surfing, eating etc. *Advanced version*: Give the groups no time to prepare or discuss beforehand. Give the location and then immediately ask each group member in turn to jump in.

  Source: Based on the game "Creating a Stage Picture" by Viola Spolin. Viola Spolin. *Improvisation for the Theater: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press. 1963. 273.

- <u>The Ad Game</u>: Split the participants into groups of 3-5. Each group is given a product to try and "advertise" to the other groups. Groups must tell what the product is, and why it is special and come up with a slogan for the product. Variatios: *The Ad Game with Musical Accompaniment*, *The Silent Ad Game*.

    Source: "The Ad Game", by The Second City (theatre group). For more information on this influential improvisation group, see http:// www.secondcity.com

    Katherine Mcknight and Mary Scruggs. *The Second City Guide to Improv in the Classroom: Grades K-8: Using Improvisation to Teach Skills and Boost Learning*. San Francisco and Chicago: Jossey-Bass and The Second City, 2008. 48.

    See also: "Create a Commercial," by Keith Johnstone/Theatre Machine Company. Keith Johnstone. *Don't be Prepared: Theatresports for Teachers*. Volume One. Calgary: Loose Moose Theatre Company, 1994. 111.

Improvisation Games Workshop Template

Below is a template that you may refer to when designing your own workshop. The structure is as follows: Prelude (5 minutes), Introductions (10 minutes), Warm-Up games (20 minutes), Focus Games (25 minutes), Break (10 minutes), Additional Large-Group Games OR Alternative Games (either of which may take 40 minutes), and Conclusion (10 minutes).

Assume that you will go through material fast. As the workshop progresses, participants may want to play a game several times over or they may want to bounce from game-to-game after only one round. It is therefore wise to know as many games as possible and implement them in the moment. The amount of time required to complete each section will often vary; introductory games (stretching and name-games) may take two minutes or, if you have a large group to lead, it may take up to 15 minutes. The time-limits listed here serve only as a guide for when to proceed to the next section.

Large-group activities:
Large-group activities may be useful in refocusing attention and creating group cohesion.
- If you are part of a team leading the workshop then consider having facilitators

dispersed around the group to a) encourage participation and b) handle any possible conflicts between individuals which arise

Small-group activities:
Small-group activities may be useful if you find that the larger group has become inattentive.
- Create small groups in different parts of the space, or by using break-out rooms.
- If you are part of a team leading the workshop, ensure that at least one team-member is in each small group
- If you are on your own as the leader of the workshop then consider having an experienced performer or volunteer in each small-group.

PRELUDE (5 MINUTES)

Begin with an ice-breaker as people enter the room. Possible options include:
- a jam between those running the workshop
- having music play from a CD or mp3 player
- strike up a conversation with new people as they enter
- have a game already under-way between those running the workshop, invite people to join as they come in

INTRODUCTIONS (10 MINUTES)

Introduce the people leading the workshop in a friendly way, and take this opportunity to have everyone do some physical warm-ups and name games.
- This is a good time to reflect on the group energy. Ask yourself: do they need to be fired up? If so, use "warm-up" games. If the group is already raring to go, you might want to go straight to some "focus" games.

WARM UP GAMES (20 MINUTES)

The purpose of warm up games is to help people to feel comfortable, often by moving around, making silly sounds, and laughing. They also help build group energy.

Examples: Krazy Choir, Imitate my Name, Name Game Dance Game, Orchestra, Improvised Name Jam, Tag Exercises, Tongue Twisters, Group Body Stretches, Counting Down from 10

FOCUS GAMES (25 MINUTES)

Focus games with the entire group may work adequately but in a specialized workshop you may want individuals to hone certain skills and break the group up for small-group activities.

Small-group activities: Collaborative Story Graphic Score, Musical Character Cards

Large-group activities: Musical Production, Send and Receive, The Yes Game, Bippity Bippity Bop, Walking Different Ways

BREAK (10 MINUTES)

COMPLEX LARGE GROUP GAMES OR ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES (40 minutes)

After the break, consider playing more complex large group games building on what you've done in the first half of the workshop. These are games which require substantial coordination and work, such as creating a collaborative graphic score and then playing it in different ways, or creating and acting out detailed scenes.

Alternatively, you might want to offer a completely different kind of activity. We found that giving mini-lessons on our instruments, and having a group jam session were popular activities with the teens at Onward Willow. Other ideas might include bringing a bunch of buckets in and holding a drum workshop or supplying various 'found' materials to build instruments.

Conclusion (10 MINUTES)
Consider bringing the group back together for a brief discussion of the workshop and farewells. What did people enjoy? What would they like to do next time? The conclusions are a great opportunity to thank everyone for coming and invite them back to the next event.

References and Resources
Check out the Improvisation Tool Kit at www.improvcommunity.ca for an extended list of resources.

Books

Charna Halpern, Del Close, Kim Johnson. *Truth in Comedy: The Manual of Improvisation*. Colorado Springs: Meriwether Publishing. 1994.

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R. Murray Schafer. *The Thinking Ear*. Indian River, ON: Arcana, 1986.

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Viola Spolin. *Improvisation for the Theater: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press. 1963.

Audiovisual Material

Viola Spolin, *Theater Game File.* Illinois: Northwestern University Press.1989. (Includes index cards of games and a handbook) The electronic version is also available on CD-ROM.

Websites

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Encyclopedia of Improv Games (2007) http://www.improvencyclopedia.org/index.html. Accessed May 16, 2010.

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Appendix A: Sample Workshop Plans
Adam Malcolm
This is one of six plans for a two-hour workshop for teens created by students in MUSC 4200, a course at the School of Fine Art and Music at the University of Guelph (winter 2010) in conjunction with the Improvisation, Community and Social Practice (ICASP) research project and their community partner, Onward Willow – Better Beginnings, Better Futures www.onwardwillowbetterbeginnings.ca. Please feel free to use any of the materials included in this plan providing you reference the source of the materials appropriately. We have done our best to give proper attributions for the activities in these plans– either in this appendix, or in the Guide. If you have any concerns, please contact ICASP at www.improvcommunity.ca where you'll also find more improvisation materials under the **Improvisation Tool Kit.**
First off, it will be very obvious that my workshop game plan is much more reliant on musical improvisation games then theatre; this is a desired effect. In my workshop I hope to introduce the idea of group musical improvisations, with theatre interspersed for variety. There is no extra equipment needed *per se*, but a variety of potential instruments would be good to have for those who did not bring their own and are not 100% comfortable with their voice.
(0:00 – 3:00) – *Basic Introductions*
- (1:00) Introduction: Leader(s) introduce themselves to the group and welcome everyone for coming. ***Basic introduction.***

- (2:00) Name/Sound Introduction: A participant starts the game by speaking his/her name followed by some kind of sound gesture. The next participant must repeat the previous person's name and sound before adding their own, and so on. ***Initiates the beginning of group cohesion.***

(3:00 – 10:00) – *Body Warm-up*
- (3:00) Circle Stretch: Participants lead the group in turns through various types of muscle stretching. ***Warms the body's muscles up for physical exercise.***

- (4:00) Vocal Warm-up: Leader brings the group through several vocal exercises in order to warm up the voice (not to be confused with choral exercises unless a seamless vocal timbre is wanted). However, the Leader is encouraged to refrain from too much actual "singing" unless the group consists of those comfortable with singing; stick to things like breathing exercises and throwing the voice around (in a way that makes it seem "fun"). ***Warms the diaphragm, lungs, facial muscles and vocal chords for any vocal music making.***

(10:00 – 20:00) – *Group Teamwork Building*
- (2:00) "Yes" Game: A participant is de-facto "it" and points at another player. The player being pointed at then says "yes", both allowing the player who is

"it" to cross to their location and simultaneously becoming "it". Whoever is moving must only get to their location once someone has vacated it. Leaders should mention ahead of time that concentration and keeping a visual watch is important to the success of the game. Eventually leaders can take out the pointing and vocalization so players only have to look and give some kind of approval. ***Builds group communication, engages participant concentration.***

(5:00) Bippity Bippity Bop: One player ("it") must call out shapes for a designated player (plus the two on either side of them) to form with their bodies. The designated player receives 5 seconds to form the shape or they are now "it". Additionally, the "it" player may say "bippity bippity bop" to another player who must retort with "Bop" before the "it" player finishes their sentence. Furthermore, if the "it" player says only "Bop", and the other player responds in any way, that player is now "it". ***Helps to ease new groups into physical closeness, helps work on attentiveness and speed.***
Source: "Bippity, Bippity, Bop," by The Second City (theatre group). For more information on this influential improvisation group, see http:// www.secondcity.com/

- (3:00) Sticky-Tag: A player is "it" and the game proceeds like standard tag. However, if a player tags another, they must join hands in a chain and are, furthermore, also "it". Once the chain gets to be about 4 players long, the "it" team will realize they need to use a lot of teamwork to succeed. Several rounds may be needed as it is typically a quick game. ***Further increases group cohesion as well as getting players more comfortable with physical closeness and touching.***

(20:00 – 30:00) – *Focus Games and Musical Improv "Tutorial" Games*
- (4:00) Krazy Choir: A leader becomes the conductor and all other players think (silently) of a song to themselves to sing. Then, the conductor conducts the group to all sing their respective songs at the same time. The conductor may also have players only sing one held note until the queue to move to the next note is given. ***Develops listening skills especially among non-chorister players.***

  Source: Christine Duncan, Element Choir

- (4:00) Simon Says: A player begins by making a sound and passing it off with their <u>right</u> hand to another. That player then has to repeat the sound <u>exactly</u> and pass it off again. If the player passes the sound with their <u>left</u> hand however, the receiving player must change the sound and then pass that sound on. Participants need to be very attentive for this game (which is why

the "'Yes' Game" initially got the group to start concentrating). ***Develops both listening and visual attentiveness, further engages group concentration.***

- (2:00) <u>Barnyard</u>: In a circle, each player is designated an animal (or instrument) noise to make via a slip of paper, with more than one person making the same noise. Then, a leader conducts each player to make their noise at once, and players must find whoever sounded the same noise as themselves and form a group. The first group to do so wins. ***Further develops listening attentiveness but adds a level of speed.***

(30:00 – 35:00) – *Trust Games*
- (2:00) <u>Obstacle Course</u>: One player (or even two players tethered together by hand) must move blindfolded through an obstacle course whilst being guided by the other players.

- (1:30) <u>Falling</u>: Have all players in a circle while one player (rotating in turns) falls to a certain side, only to be propped up by the others. Vary this with the falling player moving around the room and then suddenly deciding to fall (and therefore be caught).

- (1:30) <u>Lift Up</u>: Similar to falling, except a player asks to be lifted up by the others.

    All of these games act to summarize how comfortable the group has become with each other since they all require high levels of trust in the other players. The Leaders can use this to gauge the group on their cohesion.

(35:00 – 45:00) – *Improvised Music Section*
- The leader will lead the group in a free musical improv. Depending on the skill level of participants, the leader may add some kind of restraints or conditions. ***This gauges the basic skill level of participants so hopefully there will be improvement by the end of the session.***

- The leader can put constraints on the group in many ways such as:

    o <u>``On the Beat``</u>: Beating time on a pulse (usually to be beat ``1`` of some kind of tempus) for which the other players perform developing ostinato variations. *****Credits to Professor Marta McCarthy, School of Fine Art and Music, University of Guelph***

    o <u>``What a Drone``</u>: Having the players improvise on a drone by the leader (usually vocally). This will allow them to feel the relation of

their own sound compared to the anchored central drone. ***Credits to Marta McCarthy**

(45:00 – 65:00) – *Small Group Games*
- Players split into small groups of about 3 – 7, each with a leader.

- (1:00) Statues: A player has a partner whom they "mould" into a statue. The other players have to guess what the statue is. **Builds creative skills on a smaller level (for the sculptor) and basic acting skills without worrying about a huge audience (for the statue).**

- (1:00) Conjoined Actors: Players partner up to perform a scene. One partner however, has no use of their hands; instead, the other partner places their arms where the others should be, to effectively become their hands. **Further solidifies comfort with group contact, introduces problems of improvised acting by removing complete control of one`s character**.*

- ***Note: The next few games are only recommended to groups that are comfortable improvising in a musical scene, otherwise they should be omitted and replaced with any theatre-style games that may be on hand (or the Leader could recycle games used before or extend their life when playing them).***
- (6:00) Graphic Scoring: The leader introduces the concept of a graphic score. All members then create one and play it. **Introduces the concept of graphic notation.**

- (4:00) Graphic Scoring – Theatre: The group does the same as above but draws the graphic score in the form of a narrative. **Prepares players for Theatre Sports-style music/acting collaborations.**

- (4:00) Soundscapes: The leader shows the group a still frame. The group must then play music that represents the picture. The leader should note to the players that the music should not "go anywhere" because this is a still frame. **Introduces the idea of playing music to create a feeling, idea or object ("Improvised Program Music").**

- (4:00) Opera: The players are given a scenario by the leader to act out. Participants must sing everything. **Further develops player comfort with one's own voice, allows the leader to gauge progress.**

(65:00 – 95:00) – *Large Group Games*
- In this section, the small groups come together (but still divided) to participate in many variants of the previous games, but with larger groups. All of the following should have several rounds based on enthusiasm

- Depending on how the leader gauged the progress of the previous section, some of the following may be changed

- (10:00) Graphic Score Pictionary: Each group draws a graphic score. Then, each group chooses one of the graphic scores to play. The other groups must guess which one it is (possibly explain why they believed that). ***Allows the leaders to gauge listening progress, allows the groups to further develop improvising for an audience.***

- (5:00) ``Too Many Conductors``: One of our small groups is the ``conductor`` and the others are the musicians. The conducting group must conduct the others in a musical improv, but they must do so as <u>one</u> conducting body (or everyone else would not know what to follow). The conducting group is encouraged to talk and otherwise communicate, and giving them a few minutes to play may be beneficial; the Leader may also show the group a few conducting methods that they may want to use. Furthermore, the Leader may want to demonstrate conducting first. ***Gets the groups further thinking of working together to create one combined improvisation.****

- (7:30) Death in a Minute: A group begins acting (silently) out a scene narrated by a second group. At any time, those groups in the audience may shout out that someone has to die. The actor in question must create their own death in less than a minute and the narrators must make sense of it to be narrated. May lead to some humorous interpretations of what the actor is indeed doing by the narrator. ***Helps to ease back into the larger group. Increases improv experience.***

- (7:30) The Giant Theatre/Opera/Typewriter/Understudy Improv: The small groups are designated as one of the following: musicians, (type)writers or actors. The writers create a story for the musicians and the actors to tell (through acting and music respectively). At any time, a player may pause the scene (if there is a large amount of players, you may allow this *in media res*) and change positions with any other. Effectively, this seamlessly re-joins our small groups into one large one. Encourage the actors to sing like in ``Opera`` if they are feeling particularly daring. ***Melds together the ideas of theatre, music and creative improv and keeps some structure for those not completely comfortable with improvising yet.***

    *This is not technically new, but I did combine many of our games for it
(95:00 – 115:00) – *Large Group Improv*
- The group is now (hopefully) ready for a large group musical improv. Leaders should remind players about some of the things they learned in the other

games (implicitly) and that they can be easily applied to musical situations. Further structure of the improv may be needed if the leader believes, here are a few ideas:

- o Structure the improv again on creating soundscapes or ``Improvised Program Music``

- o Have the players work around a central theme or cell to be developed

- o Have players improvise by creating exclusively long sounds, short sounds, quiet sounds, percussive noises, etc.

The leader can judge by this final improv the improvising skills of players compared to the beginning improv on both a personal and group level.

(115:00 – 120:00) – *Goodbyes and Thanks*
- Leaders thank everyone for coming out and wish them a sincere goodbye

* Indicates a new game of my invention

Appendix B: Sample Workshop Plans

Maeve O'Sullivan

This is one of six plans for a two-hour workshop for teens created by students in MUSC 4200, a course at the School of Fine Art and Music at the University of Guelph (winter 2010) in conjunction with the Improvisation, Community and Social Practice (ICASP) research project and their community partner, Onward Willow – Better Beginnings, Better Futures www.onwardwillowbetterbeginnings.ca. Please feel free to use any of the materials included in this plan providing you reference the source of the materials appropriately. We have done our best to give proper attributions for the activities in these plans – either in this appendix, or in the Guide. If you have any concerns, please contact ICASP at www.improvcommunity.ca where you'll also find more improvisation materials under the **Improvisation Toolkit.**

To start: We should have an improvisational jam with our instruments, in order to attract some attention. Hopefully, there will be a piano around. This shouldn't take any longer than six or seven minutes.

Once a few people have come around, we should introduce ourselves. Something simple, like: "Hi, we're from the University of Guelph and we're here to do some improv games tonight. You're welcome to join us if you want to."
(On the off-chance that no one comes around, we should just jump into it and wait until people join to introduce ourselves.)

Name Games:

- Alliteration: Going around in a circle, "My name is Maeve and I like marshmallows." (1-2 min)
A very simple improv exercise to get people used to the idea while introducing themselves.

- Name tennis: Throw the ball (or hackeysack) to someone else while saying your name. That person throws it to someone else while saying their own name. (Once everyone is more comfortable with each other's names, we could change it around by having the person throwing saying the name of the person they are throwing to.) (2-3 min)
A common warm-up game that combines physical concentration with learning people's names. Ellen Waterman learned it from Trinidadian pianist Jessel Murray.

- Handshake game: Maeve: "Maeve."
                        Adam: "Adam."
                        Maeve: "Adam."
                        Adam: "Maeve."
        (Going around the circle) (2-3 min)

A Name Game that also requires a bit more mental concentration.

I can't imagine us needing more than two or three different Name Games.

Warm-Ups:

- o Stretching: Everyone suggests a stretching exercise. (2-4 min)
Preparation for physical activity, with some very basic improvisation.

- o Follow the Hand: Split into pairs. Person A must try to be at eye level with the palm of Person B. B moves around the room, and A must follow. Can also be played with two or even three A's. (3-5 min)
Source: Common warm-up game. A good way to get people moving without them having to make physical contact, which some may not be comfortable with yet.

- o Musical Motion: Two or three people play instruments while the rest walk around the room. Depending on the mood/tempo/tone of the improvised music, the people walking around move slower or faster, lazily or vigorously, etc. (2-3 min)
Source: Common warm-up game. Gets people used to the idea of combining music and action in group improvisation.

- o Shapes and Letters: Someone names a letter or number, and groups of two or three must form the shape of that letter or number. (2-3 min)
Source: Rebecca Caines. Introduction to working in small groups on a basic level. Also introduces minimal physical contact with other participants. Groups can sort themselves by gender if some are not yet comfortable with that.

- o Body Hide *(from Improv Encyclopedia)*: Five volunteers. Four of these must try and hide the fifth person from the front, using nothing but their bodies. The other students stand around the group and try and see any pieces of the fifth's clothes, shoes, skin. Don't tell them that they go next, with one person less. Try this game with fewer and fewer "hiders." (3-4 min)
Same basic idea as Shapes and Letters, but with a different creative task.

- o Rhythms: Going around in a circle, make up a rhythm for the group to copy. The rhythm can use handclaps, voice, etc. (3-4 min)
Introduction to improvising with non-vocal sounds (though vocal sounds are allowed for those comfortable) for people who might be reluctant to improvise vocally.

- o Tongue Twisters: Everyone tries to do tongue twisters in unison. Anyone who thinks of a tongue twister may suggest it. (2-3 min)
A non-improvisational vocal exercise in which everyone vocalises together. No one is put on the spot or singled out if they are uncomfortable vocalising.

- Krazy Khoir: Everyone picks a different song and the "conductor" "conducts" their singing all together, syllable by syllable. (3-4 min)

Source: Christine Duncan, Element Choir. Adds an improvisational and musical element to vocalising, but still without singling out any people who are uncomfortable vocalising on their own.

Focus Games:

- "Yes" Game: Begin with both "pointing" and "Yes." Move on to "glancing" with "Yes," and "glancing" with "nodding." (5-6 min)

A game that sounds simple but requires a lot of concentration. Encourages people to focus on the game and pay attention to each other.

- How Far Can We Count: With one person at a time saying a number, the group counts up from 1 as high as they can. Anyone can say the next number, but if two or more people say it at the same time, we have to stop and start at 1 again. It's good to have a goal in mind for this game; for example, to reach 15 or 20. (3-4 min)

Encourages people to listen carefully to each other in order to reach the goal of the game.

- Boppity-Bop-Bop-Bop: One person stands in the centre of the circle. That person can point to anyone in the circle and say "boppity-bop-bop-bop", and the person they are pointing at has to say "bop!" before the person pointing finishes saying "boppity-bop-bop-bop". If the person who was pointed says "bop" in time, they are safe, and can stay where they are. But if that person fails to say "bop" in time, they are out, and have to trade places with the person in the centre. The person in the centre can also point to anyone and just say "bop". If the person they point to says nothing, that person if safe, but if they accidentally say "bop", they are out. The point is to listen carefully to what the person in the centre is saying to avoid getting caught. (6-7 min)

Source: Variation of Second City's Bippity Bippity Bop. A game that combines intense concentration with intense listening.

- Soundscapes: One group tries to create a scene using only sound effects, while the other group tries to guess the scene. (4-5 min)

Gets people to focus on the aural rather than the visual elements of a scene, and the importance of sound and music in improvisation.

Hype-Up Games:

- Counting From 10: Everyone counts down from ten in a circle, using both arms and legs. First, put the right arm in the circle and shake it ten times as you count 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10. Then do the same with the left arm, the right leg and the

left leg. After that go back to the right arm, but only go up to nine this time. continue until you reach one. Everyone's voice should start soft, and gradually get louder as gradually get louder as you reach one. (1-2 min)

Source: common theatre game. A great hype-up game.

- ○ Link Tag: Requires an even number of people. Everyone pairs up and links arms, with two people remaining unlinked. One of these people is It and the other is being chased. The chased person must link arms with someone who is already linked. The chased person then becomes safe, and the person they link arms with remains safe. However, the person on the far side must let go and is now the chased. If caught, they become It. (Hug Tag can be substituted if people seem comfortable enough.) (4-6 min)

Source: variation on common theatre game. A hype-up activity which requires cooperation and contact with other people. I thought it might be a more appropriate tag game than hug tag, simply because teens may be more comfortable with linking arms than "hugging."

Group Games:

- ○ Silent Story: Standing in a circle, one person makes a silent motion. The next person to their right makes a silent motion in reaction to that one. A "silent story" is made through silent actions and reactions around the circle. (5-6 min)

This game encourages individual improvisation on a turn-by-turn basis, without any pressure to vocalise or make noise, which some people may not yet feel comfortable doing individually.

- ○ Statues: Everyone pairs off. Person A invents a pose for Person B. All A's then arrange the B's in their respective poses in the centre, so that they look like a still picture. The A's then try to invent a scenario or story based on the Bs' "picture." The A's and B's then switch. (4-5 min)

Gets people more used to working in pairs, and being able to think creatively and collaboratively.

- ○ Graphic Scores: The audience makes up a graphic score on a white board or sheet of paper. It could be a "program" score or an "absolute" one. Then, either a few musicians or all participants interpret it with improvisation. Repeat as appropriate. (6-7 min)

An artistic and musical improv activity that encourages people to think about music and what qualifies as music in different ways.

- ○ Sounds in a Circle: Stand in a circle with backs facing inwards and close your eyes. One person makes a sound, and whoever feels that that sound is directed at them repeats it. Others add sounds as you go along. Try to keep all of the sounds going. (2-3 min)

Gets people used to abstract vocal and non-vocal improvisation on an individual basis, without having people feeling that they are being put on the spot (hence, facing outwards).

- o Advertising: Split off into small groups. Each group chooses a product to try and "advertise" to the other groups, using only movements. In the second round, they try to advertise a new product using only sounds. (5-6 min)

Encourages people to think about the similarities and differences between visual and sound-based improvisation, and doing the same activity in a different format may help people who are more comfortable with silent improv than sound-based improv open up a bit more.

- o Postcards: Split into groups of four or five. Create a "postcard" with each person announcing their role as they assume their pose. Start with pre-planning a scene, then move to improvising it. (4-5 min)

Promotes working collaboratively and cooperatively with others, and also places importance on each person's individual contribution, promoting confidence.

Theatre Games:

- o Name Cards: Everyone randomly picks an identity written on a piece of paper, and all interact with each other silently. When the leader says "stop," try and guess everyone's identity. Next round, try using music to portray a new random identity. (4-5 min)

A confidence-promoting game that has people try on new identities and personas, while interacting with others or not.

- o Typewriter: A "typewriter" narrates a story while some people act it out silently, and others accompany with music. The story can either be a familiar one (like a fairy tale) or can be completely improvised. To mix it up, have the musicians and actors switch midway through the story. (5-6 min)

Mixes theatrical and musical improvisation, in more ways than one, and demonstrates how drama can affect music in improv and vice versa.

- o Understudy: A few people start acting out a scene. When whoever's in charge says "Freeze," the actors freeze and someone from the audience goes and takes one of their places. "Unfreeze" and the scene resumes. (3-4 min)

Encourages people to try full-on dramatic improvisation, while not forcing them to do so when they do not feel comfortable.

Story Games:

- o Spell a Word: Try to spell a word going in a circle, one letter at a time. The catch is that if you finish a word by saying the last letter of it, you lose. For example, of the order goes Q-U-I-Z, the person who said Z loses for having spelled a complete word. For simplicity's sake, it must be at least a four-letter word in order for the

person to lose; two- and three-letter words do not count. If someone says a letter that you do not think is compatible with spelling a word, you can challenge them, and if they cannot prove that they had a real word on mind when saying that letter, they lose. If they can, you lose. The object is to keep the word going as long as possible without having to finish it. (This game may not be appropriate if there are non-native English speakers participating.) (3-4 min)

Promotes strategic thinking and the learning of new vocabulary.

- o One-Word Story: Same principle as Spell a Word, but instead telling a story in a circle one letter at a time. No winner or loser in this one; just see how far you can go. (3-4 min)

Promotes some strategic thinking and active participation and creativity.

- o ABC Story: Standing in a circle, choose a letter of the alphabet. One person begins a story, saying a sentence starting with that letter. The next person's response must start with the next letter of the alphabet, going around in a circle until all 26 letters have been used. (3-4 min)

Encourages both creative and strategic thinking.

- o Yes, But: One person is the "answerer" who takes the audience's Yes or No questions one at a time, always answering them with "Yes, but_____". Try to keep the questions related to the last "Yes, but" answer. Audience can go either in a specific order, or at random when they think of a question. Take turns being the "answerer". If there is a big group present, divide people up into smaller groups, so that everyone can participate. (4-5 min)

Encourages people to think about the way they phrase a question, and encourages spontaneous creativity.

Trust Games:

- o Car Game: One person is the car; the other is a driver who steers the "car" by touching their back. Centre of the back means move straight forward, left side means turn left, right side means turn right, no contact means stop. Try not to crash your car. For added fun, have the car close their eyes. (3-4 min)

Promotes a sense of trust on the part of the "blind" person and a sense of responsibility on the "seeing" one, encourages cooperation between the two.

- o Falling Game: Walking around randomly, a person suddenly shouts "Falling" and everyone must immediately go and support them. Eventually include "Rising," and more than one person needing assistance at once. (4-5 min)

Source: Common theatre trust game. Encourages collaborative trust and cooperation, and paying attention to your surroundings and to others' needs.

If there is time at the end, ask the participants for feedback on the activities (what they liked, what they didn't, etc.) and if they have any of their own suggestions for games. If not, then perhaps a jam session can follow. Be sure to thank them all for participating and welcome them back for the next week.

Appendix C: Sample Workshop Plans

Khuong Pham

This is one of six plans for a two-hour workshop for teens created by students in MUSC 4200, a course at the School of Fine Art and Music at the University of Guelph (winter 2010) in conjunction with the Improvisation, Community and Social Practice (ICASP) research project and their community partner, Onward Willow – Better Beginnings, Better Futures www.onwardwillowbetterbeginnings.ca. Please feel free to use any of the materials included in this plan providing you reference the source of the materials appropriately. We have done our best to give proper attributions for the activities in these plans – either in this appendix, or in the Guide. If you have any concerns, please contact ICASP at www.improvcommunity.ca where you'll also find more improvisation materials under the **Improvisation Toolkit.**

Open Jam & Introduction (5 - 10 mins):

To get the teens' attention, I think we should start off with an open jam (5-10 mins). Once they have gathered around, we end the jam session and introduce ourselves and what we are doing there. The introduction (2 mins) could go something like this: "Hi everyone, we're from the University of Guelph, and tonight, we are going to play some music and drama games with you. Any Questions before we get started?"

Stretching Excercises (5-10 mins)

Have everyone to come up with a stretching exercise, and do each one as we go around in circle.

Game Name (5-7 mins): The objective is to get everyone to know each other's names and to be familiarized with the people in the group.

1) Sing Your Name: (1 min) Go around in a circle and have each participant sing their names or add sound effect(s) to their names after it is spoken.

2) Memorizing Name With Gesture (2 mins): A person starts by saying his/her name and adding a musical gesture or sound at the end of their names. The next person in the circle has to say the name(s) of the previous person(s) and gestures before adding theirs to the list.

3) *Bumpity Bump [1] (3 mins):* Fun game for a new group to get to know each other. All players should be in a circle. Give them time to recall the names of the players on either side of them. Once the names are remembered, the person in the middle goes up to a player and says "(name), bumpity bump bump bump." That person then has to say the

names of the people sitting/standing beside him/her before the middle person finishes saying "bumpity bump bump bump."

High Energy Game (19-23 mins): objective is to get everyone pumped up and ready for actions.

•*Scream Game [2] (2-4 mins):* After the leader/instructor says "GO!" everyone in the group will find a person or a small group and scream at them as loud as he/she can, the person or the group responds by screaming back at the one that's screaming at them; once you get bored of screaming at that person or group, go to the next one and do it again. Leader/instructor stops the group to "refine" the game to suit his/her liking.

2) Hug Tag (5 mins): A person is "it" and tries to tag everyone else. The "not it" is safe only when he/she hugs someone; the hug can only last for 5 seconds before the couple has to break up and find a new person to be safe with. You are "it" once you are tagged and the person that was "it" becomes "not it".

Variation (3): instead of replacing the "it", a person that is tagged joins the "it" and continues the crusade until everyone is it.

•**Counting Down From 10 Shake (2 mins):** the group forms a circle and starts counting softly as they shake their hands and feet one at a time. They start counting from 1-10, then 1-9, etc... and each round, increases the volume until they reach the loudest at 1, then everyone jumps up with a loud cheer.

4) My Fault [4] (5-7 mins): * Need 2 plastic bottles, each with a little bit of water.*
Have everyone walk around leisurely, and hand 2 players the bottles. The idea is to make eye contact with someone. As soon as a player has eye contact with a player holding a bottle, the bottle is thrown. If at any point the bottle is dropped, both the thrower and the receiver lie down on the floor and repeatedly shout "MY FAULT! MY FAUT! MY FAULT" as loud as possible until the leader/instructor tells them to stop. After that, one of them picks up the bottle and the game continues.

Side coaching: tell the players to take risks, to try and make eye contact with a player at the other side of the room.

* The effect of this is that it build trust between the two people and encourage them to work together to keep the water bottle from dropping because the consequence for dropping it has the same effect for both of them.

5) *Man Overboard [5] (5 mins):* Everyone spreads out in a staggered line, like in an aerobics class. Then the leader/instructor calls one of the following:
    •"Land ahoy" - and everyone hops on one foot, doing a salute with one hand
    •"Hit the deck" - all down on the floor in a push-up position
    •"octopus" - everyone do jumping jacks

- "Man overboard" - everyone has to find another person and one of them has to be on the ground as if they were in the sea, and the other person standing act as if they were trying to rescue the other person
- "two three four" - all sit down and start rowing

Whoever is last drops out. Repeat until all but one are out.

Focus Game (13-20 mins): objective is to calm people down if they're too wild and rowdy.

- ***Variation of the Yes Game [6] (3-5 mins):*** The group forms a circle. Everyone in the group starts off by pointing to the person that they want to switch spots with; if the person that has been pointed at wants to switch spots with the one that's doing the pointing, he/she says yes to it, if not, say no. Once everyone feels comfortable with this, switch the pointing to eye contact and the yes/no to just nodding/shaking the head.

- ***Rhythm Exchange [7] (5-7 mins):*** Have the group stand in a circle. The leader/ instructor gives each person a particular rhythm. Once everyone is assigned a rhythm, they can exchange their rhythms for another one with another person.

*Variation: instead of assigning a rhythm, the leader/instructor assigns a sound(s).

The exchange is made through eye contacts and a nod from the two persons for acknowledgement.

3) Boppity Bop Bop Bop (5-10 mins): Create a circle. Have one person to go into the middle of the circle and point at a person and says a predetermined action or thing (ex. koala bear, elephant, surfer, etc...), then right after the person that's being pointed to along with the persons that are beside him/her have to act out the action or thing before the person in the middle finishes saying "boppity bop bop bop". Also, if the leader says "boppity bop bop bop" to anyone, that person must say "bop" before the leader finishes the phrase. If the leader only says "bop" you say nothing.

Group Games (30 - 45 mins): the objective is to get everyone working together as team; develop communication skills; taking initiative in leading; build bonds with other members of the group.

1) *Variation of Soundscapes (Multiple Groups) [8] (10-15 mins):* Have groups of 4-5 and get them to go different rooms to come up with 1-3 scenarios (depending on how many groups there are) that they will describe using only sounds (NO words allow), they must also come up with a name for their teams as well. Once they are ready, regroup them in one room and pick a group to sit / lay on the ground and close their eyes. The remaining groups then describe the scenarios all at the same time. The group that's sitting / lying down has to guess each one of the scenarios along with the name of the group that's

describing the scenarios; if they guess the scenario correctly the group that's describing that scenario has to be quiet. Once the guessing group finished guessing, choose a new group to be the guessing group. Repeat this until every group had a chance to guess. The group with the fastest time wins.

2) *Survivor [9] (10-15 mins):* Divide into groups of 4-6. One group acts out a scene, while the remaining groups become the audience that can choose one of the players from the group that's acting out the scene to be "voted off the island." The remaining players do the scene again, covering everything that happened the first time. Then another person gets voted out, and so on until one person has to act out the scene all by themselves. Once the acting group is done, have another group do the acting; do this until every group has a chance to act.

There are various ways of re-playing the original scene, even when only one player left: player can do a monologue, can play all original characters herself, you name it.

You can play this for an audience, but it`s also a great listening and paying-attention exercise.

3) Typewriter (10-15 mins): A person tells a short story. The rest split into two groups, one act out the scene and the other add music to accompany the actions. Once the story ends, have everyone switch up.

4) *Postcard Picture Variation [10] (10-15 mins)***:** Have groups of 3-4 people. The leader/ instructor quietly tells each group of a famous place that the group has to create or describe using only their bodies. The other groups has to guess what that place is, and whoever gets it right first gets a point. The group with the most number of points wins.

* I decided to have some competitions in the group games because I want them to develop good teamwork skills by building group cohesion and working more effectively as a team to earn the points.

* The workshop would end with a 5-10 mins open jam.

Endnote / Credit:

1) I took this one from Improv Encyclopedia website: http://improvencyclopedia.org/games//Bumpity_Bump_.html

2) I made this one up.

3) I made this variation up.

4) I took this one from Improv Encyclopedia website: http://improvencyclopedia.org/games//My_Fault.html

5) I took this one from Improv Encyclopedia website: http://improvencyclopedia.org/games//Man_Overboard.html

6) I made this one up.

7) I made this one up.

8) I made this one up.

- I took this one from Improv Encyclopedia website: http://improvencyclopedia.org/games//Survivor.html

10) I made up this variation.

Appendix D: Sample Workshop Plans
Matthew Saayman
This is one of six plans for a two-hour workshop for teens created by students in MUSC 4200, a course at the School of Fine Art and Music at the University of Guelph (winter 2010) in conjunction with the Improvisation, Community and Social Practice (ICASP) research project and their community partner, Onward Willow – Better Beginnings, Better Futures www.onwardwillowbetterbeginnings.ca. Please feel free to use any of the materials included in this plan providing you reference the source of the materials appropriately. We have done our best to give proper attributions for the activities in these plans – either in this appendix, or in the Guide. If you have any concerns, please contact ICASP at www.improvcommunity.ca where you'll also find more improvisation materials under the **Improvisation Toolkit.**
Preface

Improvisation is really nothing new to Western music. J.S Bach improvised on the organ during church services. Mozart and Chopin improvised their works in performance. Instrument maker Keith Hill describes the various "schools" of improvisation: there are procedural improvisers, such as Bach, who follow a given set of rules (figured bass for example) and decide what to play when and how. There are also the "lick" improvisers who memorize and improvise on segments from musical literature, or passages. Additionally, there are the "noodlers" who play around on an instrument without a particular aim until they arrive at a suitable idea . Whatever the type of improvisation, I believe that all are commendable and helpful in the fostering of strong musician.

Before I was enrolled in piano lessons I doodled at the piano. Being blessed with a good hear and knack for making music, I would fool around at the piano until I finally decided that I ought to take lessons. To inspire other people to learn more about music should be one of our goals while at Onward Willow. I understand that not everyone is able to enroll musical lessons, but through taking part in accessible and inclusive music-making it is my hope that some participants will be encouraged to pursue musical interests outside the workshops, or try to reach their potential if they already have musical training.

Certainly, the workshop will be about having fun and providing an inclusive environment for everyone involved. However, I do not believe that improvisation should be simply thoughtless noise making. Improvisers ought to *listen* to one another and build ideas of one another, not independently of one another. True, there can be something exhilarating and fun about loud and rugged sounds. I am not saying we should only play delicately or quietly. There is a time to let loose a fury of noises but there is also a time to hold back and restrain one's instrument. Good listening skills, spontaneity, adaptive playing—that is, the ability to hear a sound and provide some sort of musical response to it—are all skills which I hope we can bring out at Onward Willow. Ultimately, however, such skills will be accomplished by instilling faith and trust in members. If a participant isn't confident he or she won't feel comfortable improvising in a given texture; he or she may be too nervous or unsure to listen.

The workshop outlined below is meant to foster all the skills described above but most importantly encourage participation and confidence. Improvisation games such as

bopity bop bop bop and *krazy choir,* however silly, will break the ice and help members to let loose. Games like *Yes-but* and *Mimicking* will help to foster spontaneity. Large-group games such as *Musical Production* and *Orchestra* will encourage team work. To reiterate, this workshop is designed to encourage good improvisational skills. Improvisation, in turn, requires confidence.

Sources:
http://www.musicalratio.com/startimprovising.html

Musical Competence and the Role of Exposure

Improvisational Workshop Plan
00:00-10:00 Introduction and Set Up
Open Jam
Workshop team members will begin with a jam. The music is to be completely improvised. Each week the type of instruments used for the jam should be different. The options include, but are not limited to,
-all players
-violin + guitar
-violin + piano
-piano + flute
-violin +violin
-etc.
While the group jam/duet/quartet is going on, the rest of the workshop team members should continue to set up (if it has not already been completed). Ie//putting chairs in a circle, clearing a space for the group, writing information on the board. The workshop team should write a brief blurb about who they are and why they are at Onward Willow. Something as simple as "Welcome to Friday Night Jams" for example, will do.

00:00 Set Up
-the workshop leader ought to have two workshop team members to their right or left. This is necessary to make game demonstrations quick and easy. For example, if the leader were explaining the game "telephone," youth participants would be able see a brief sequence of how the game works. The other team members ought to be dispersed around the circle.
05:00Welcome
After enough youth have taken their seats and filled the room, the jam should come to an end. Then the workshop leader should stand and address the group. He or she will have been chosen to lead the workshop prior to that evening. The workshop leader should be courteous and friendly. They will begin by introducing themselves and explaining why they are at Onward Willow. An explanation such as "we're university students interested in improvisation" or "we're university students interested in jamming' are okay. The less explaining at the beginning, the better; it is essential that the games commence as quickly as possible.

10:00-40:00 Early Workshop Games—ice breakers, name games, warm ups, cool-down games/concentration games

These games are designed to get the group energy going. The games will function as ice-breakers as many of the youth will not know each other. At the very least, members will be unacquainted with the workshop team.

10:00 Name Games
-*Around the Circle:* members will simply go around the circle by stating their name
Around the Circle with Favourite Things: Members will state their name and something that they like. "I am Matthew and I like peanuts." Player two will repeat the previous player's name and interest, and state their own name and interest.
-*Around the Circle with music:* (This is a variation on "Action Syllables" from http://improvencyclopedia.org/games/index.html) Members will state their name followed by musical idea (it can be a random noise, imitation of an animal, or an actual instrument). The second player will state the name and noise of player one (repeating it to the best of their ability whether or not they have the appropriate instrument).
-Handshake: members will stand in a circle. The first player (ideally the group leader) will turn to the player to the left, state his or her own name while shaking hands with the second player, and say the name of the second player. Then player one will move on to player three and then on to player four. Player two will then move on to shake hands with player three. This sequence will continue until players have returned to their original seats.

20:00 Warm Ups

Physical Warm-ups: participants do stretches. One person in the circle begins by stretching. Everyone present follows his or her lead. The second person provides another stretch.

25:00 *Counting down from 10 shake*: players stand in a circle and shake each of their hands and feet in the circle while counting down from ten—quietly! Immediately following this, players do the same actions slightly louder but count down from nine. As the players reach three, two one, they should gradually increase in volume. The goal with this game is build up the excitement in the room and encourage active participation. This game will be helpful at getting the group active it is timid or inactive, or, alternatively, at honing the rowdiness of the group into a single game.

27:00 *Mimicking*: (This is similar to "Variations" from http://improvencyclopedia.org/games/index.html). Any group size ought to work appropriately. Players sit in a circle and are to mimic one another as best they can, regardless of what instrument they have. This is essentially a musical version of "Telephone" and will act as an ice-breaker. Players are encouraged to pass the idea on relatively quickly. An idea stated on violin may be difficult to transfer to a snare drum, for example, but such difficulty will make for

interesting dynamics and encourage participants to act freely. Participants will learn to be adaptive players, being forced to push the bounds of their creativity.

30:00 Yes-But: (This is taken from Keith *Johnstone's Impro for Storytellers*). Done in teams of two. Teams will have two minutes each to carry out a conversation. Player one asks player two a yes or no question, but player two can answer *only* with "Yes, but…." The challenge is to be spontaneous and add whatever silly idea or sentence which comes to mind. For example, "Aren't you sick of that ice cream?" "Yes, but I have to keep eating it."

35:00 *Gibberish/Past Incident*: (This is taken from Viola Spolin's *Improvisation For the Theatre*). Two or more individuals will act out a scene while speaking in gibberish. While this is going on, two other participants should translate the gibberish into English. The selection of participants should be random, so that no planning can be made beforehand.

OR

35:00 *Bopity bop bop bop:* One player is "IT." This player stands in the circle and points at other participants while saying "Bopity bop bop bop." If the player in question does not say "bob" before the sentence is complete, then that person is "IT." On the other hand, if the "IT" player says only "bob" then the player in question *must* remain silent—otherwise they are "IT." To make the game more challenging, the "IT" player can point at members and state a place or thing. The player in question and the two players on the left and right must make that shape or place within five seconds or they are "IT." For example, if the "IT" player says "elephant," then the player in question forms a trunk with their arms while the players on their left form the ears with their arms. Participants are free to add other persons, places, or things, as the game progresses.

OR

35:00 *Krazy Choir:* Players are conducted to sing a song of their own choosing. All players will, on cue, sing their songs simultaneously. The first run through will be done up to speed. The second time, the players will sing much slower, producing a note on each beat or cue.

DISCUSSION

As a transition to the next section the group leader ought to try and generate discussion around how the warm-up games went. For example, the leader should compliment participants on what they did. The group leader should ask members why they decided to produce certain sounds or actions. The discussion need not be simply an "around the circle" action. In fact, no more than a few minutes should be allotted to discussion in between games.

It is at the discretion of the group leader whether to go to "cool down/concentration games" or to "late workshop exercises." Depending on the group dynamics displayed at the beginning of the session, the group leader might want to begin with "cool down" games (as opposed to "warm up games). If the group is rather slow to start or lethargic, it might be best to start with "warm up games" to get the adrenalin going.

40:00-60:00 Cool Down Games/Concentration Games/Focus Games

40:00 *Falling:* practice with whole group supporting one person falling in a circle, then milling around the room and people choose to yell "falling" at random and others have to come support them.
*Note: Depending on the situation, this game may not be applicable. If one individual has a broken leg, for example, he or she will be unable to participate. In such circumstances consider leaving the game 'Falling' out.

45:00 *Leave For a Reason*: (This is taken from http://improvencyclopedia.org/games/index.html). Players walk around the room while remaining completely silent. All players should, without speaking, come to an agreement as to why they should leave. Players are to leave the room at the same time, by which time the reason for leaving should be obvious.

50:00 *Shadowing:* taken from Viola Spolin's Improvisation for the Theatre). Two teams of two are created. Two players act out a scene together. Two players act as the "shadows" of other players. They are the player's conscience and make comments or suggestions about what their partner is doing.

60:00 BREAK
Depending on the time, it might be best for a quick bathroom/water break. Don't let the break drag on. The break ought to be about an hour through the workshop. Depending on how the time goes by, the group may have already gone through one large group game, or through a variety of warm up and cool down games. After the break, considerable time can be focused on large group games.

70:00-100:00 Late Workshop Exercises—Large Group Games/Small Group Games

70:00 *Advertising Jingles:* -members will put into teams with instruments at their disposal. They will be given a thing, place, or person, for which they must design a commercial or radio jingle. Players have the option of a) singing a jingle with musical accompaniment or b) acting out a commercial with musical accompaniment.

75:00 *Group Score*: members each have the chance to draw something on the chalkboard/whiteboard/paper. Players then improvise music to accompany the drawing.

80:00 *Musical Production: (*variation on "Typewriter" from http://improvencyclopedia.org/games/index.html). This game will not involve every member of the group at once. Two teams of four are created. A fifth person is assigned as the "author" or "director" of the musical production. The director/author narrates a story (well-known or of their own invention). One team acts out the scene while the other team provides musical accompaniment. The performance should last five to seven minutes. Halfway through the performance, the director should shout "freeze!" At this point, the teams will swap roles. The actors will now provide musical accompaniment, while the musicians will step into the roles of actors. They are to fulfill the role of the already existing characters.

90:00 *In Unison!*

A group size of at least twelve is recommended. Too few players will mean stagnation and poor dynamics. Players will attempt to make order from chaos. It will demand innovation and spontaneity on the parts of all the players, and the conductor.

-The workshop leader will explain hand cues for a variety of emotions and dynamics such as forte, piano, elatedness, melancholy, and so on. This can be decided beforehand or modified by the conductor
-The workshop leader chooses a conductor from among the participants
-The goal of the game is to end the piece in unison (as close to it as possible)
-The conductor ought to make it interesting by giving cues for silence, thereby stopping and restarting the piece and interrupting the flow of music. Players attempt to sync up with one another as quickly as possible

OR

90:00 "*Orchestra.*" (This is taken from *Improvisational Theatre For the Classroom.* Robert Alexander)

Groups of two or three are created. One participant is the conductor. Each team agrees on a noise that they will make as a group (this exercise should be done *without* real instruments). The conductor will lead the group in an improvised performance, using cues such as "louder," "softer," "stop," and so on. Such cues are open to alteration.

100:00-120:00 Conclusion/Wrap-Up

The workshop leader has a variety of options. Depending on the direction that the large-group exercises are going, they can choose to keep such games going until the workshop finishes. As an alternative, the workshop leader may choose to have the group go through additional 'cool-down' games (see above). Again, this depends on how many of these games were used. The last option is for the entire group to have an open

improvisation lasting between five and fifteen minutes. There should be little direction given for this undertaking.

Spolin, Viola. Improvisation for the Theater: A Handbook of Directing and Teaching Techniques. Northwestern University Press. 1983

Johnstone, Keith. Impro for Storytellers. Routledge, Theatre Arts Books, New York. 1999.

Robert Alexander, Improvisational Theatre for the Classroom. Ed. Wendy Haynes, The Living Stage Theatre Company

http://improvencyclopedia.org/games/index.html

Appendix E: Sample Workshop Plans

Claire Whitehead

This is one of six plans for a two-hour workshop for teens created by students in MUSC 4200, a course at the School of Fine Art and Music at the University of Guelph (winter 2010) in conjunction with the Improvisation, Community and Social Practice (ICASP) research project and their community partner, Onward Willow – Better Beginnings, Better Futures www.onwardwillowbetterbeginnings.ca. Please feel free to use any of the materials included in this plan providing you reference the source of the materials appropriately. We have done our best to give proper attributions for the activities in these plans – either in this appendix, or in the Guide. If you have any concerns, please contact ICASP at www.improvcommunity.ca where you'll also find more improvisation materials under the **Improvisation Toolkit.**

The "flow" of this workshop is based on creating a sense of inclusion and accessibility for less socially comfortable people. So, the workshop will start out with big circle activities and involve everyone doing everything, vocalizing all at once and gradually making louder sounds together. Then, things will break off into group work in which the ideas of acceptance and openness to all kinds of creative minds will be central to the games. As well, the flow involves a mix of both music and drama games so as to create a sense that the skills from improvised drama can relate to the skills from improvised music and visa-versa.

Introduction (2 min)
We are a group from the University of Guelph that would like to do some music and drama improvisation with you.
-    Who likes Music? Why?
-    Who likes Drama? Why?
Well, I hope all of the things we do today will fulfill those fun parts for you.

Warm up Activities (10 min)
-    group circle body stretches (2.5 min)
     o   Everyone stands in a circle and each person around the circle gets to offer a suggested stretch for everyone to do.
     o   The purpose of this warm up is to get everyone's bodies ready for 2 hours of moving around in, possibly, new ways. The circle configuration might also be a nice way to establish a recognition of everyone in the group. Also, the circle establishes that we are a group doing something, for those watching and interested in doing something.
-    crazy choir (2.5 min)
     o   In this activity, everyone starts singing a song while the facilitator "conducts" the songs by moving their hands in such a way that directs timing, volume, etc.
     o   The purpose of this game is to get everyone's mouths moving and to get everyone vocalizing at once. This "at once" idea is important for a warm-

up because it allows those who are more shy about vocalizing to start getting comfortable using their voice with the group while everyone else is making sounds as well. Also, it is fun because no one sounds "good", as everyone's songs will be clashing with other songs, but there is a possibility for group cohesion and good moments with the conduction. Also, the conducting used by the facilitator might initiate the idea that the facilitator is the person to pay attention to.

- *Other leaders: Ellen can lead choir if she wants, or anyone else who wants to conduct.*

- Music/dance name-game[1] (5 min)
  - The whole group lines up in two lines facing each other. One person at the beginning of the line asks the person across from them "hi, what's your name?" and then starts making a sound (preferably typical and theatrical) and the person across from them answers their name while doing a dance-move to that sound. This would be really fun with instruments, but voices or rhythm making on bodies might work fine.
  - This game will be good not only as a name-game, but as a way to get people thinking and almost performing on their feet. As well, I imagine it might create some laughs.
  - *Other leaders: Me and Sarah can demonstrate where she asks/plays and I dance/answer)*

Hype-Up Activities/Games (10 min)

- counting down from 10 shake (2 min)
  - Everyone stands in a circle as close to each other as possible. Everyone shakes each hand and each foot ten times while counting out loud to 10. Next, they all shake their arms and legs 9 times while counting to nine, and so one down to one. At the beginning, they count to 10 very quietly, then get louder with their counting each time the numbers go down until everyone is shouting "One!" when they shake each arm and leg.
  - This is a really good hype-up activity because, not only does it get everyone moving, but it gets them yelling as well. Also, it is good for social skills building because everyone does it together and they all start quietly and then they all end up yelling together. Usually after this game everyone is laughing and happy that they did that together, so they're ready to run around or do almost anything...

- Create obstacles[2] (5 min)
  - Everyone splits into pairs, one person in the pair is the chaser and one person is the runner/obstacle. The runner has to periodically make obstacles for the person who's chasing them. If two different runners in the room make an obstacle together, they can be the chasers. (This is an extension of the original rules that I added in case the game doesn't work as is)
  - This is mostly useful because it gets people running around, but it also forces creativity!

- o This game is most successful in a large enough space for all to run around in.
  - o *Other leaders: some pairs should be mixed teens and leaders*
- human knot (3 min)
  - o Human Knot is a game where everyone stands in a tight circle and holds hands with anyone in the circle (not necessarily someone beside them). Then, still holding hands, everyone tries to unravel themselves back into a big open circle.
  - o This game will be useful to get people physically close to one another and to get people willing to work at a task together and help each other out. It also, usually, creates a lot of laughter.

Warm up Games (10 min)
- create letters (5 min)[9]
  - o How you play this game is by breaking the group into groups of 3 or 4. The facilitator (me) calls out a letter of the alphabet and each group has to make that letter with the shape of their bodies all together. There is a time limit, so that everyone has to construct the letter in, say, 10 seconds.
  - o I see this as more of a warm up game because the purpose of this game is to get the players to cooperate, i.e. getting to know one another, but it's also very simple in the end goal. Also, with the time constraint, it is a hype-up game, which is conducive to warming up the group and getting people excited. The idea of using one's imagination in this game is also a segue from warm-up "activities" to creative "games"
  - o *Other leaders: some groups should be mixed teens and leaders*
- Cow, duck, cat[3] (2 min)
  - o The group is divided in two. With all eyes closed, the facilitator taps everyone on each side on the shoulder and depending on how many taps they get, they are designated a cow, duck or cat. Then, with eyes open, everyone starts making their noise at once and they have to find others of their kind until everyone is sitting down with their group. This can also be done using musical instruments, maybe as a second level.
  - o This game is useful as a warm up because it starts with the whole group and then makes people break off into smaller groups. This segues into small group games. It also can be made more musical by designating the musical instruments.
- 3 scenes[4] (3 min)
  - o In groups of 3, each group has to come up with 3 different scenes that act out one event (given by the facilitator). They have 1 minute to prepare all three different scenes, in which everyone is involved in each scene. Then, after the minute is up each group has to act out their scenes.
  - o This game could be a small groups game and after the time is up, each small group performs their 3 scenes to the rest of the group. This game is about acceptance because, with a time limit to come up with 3 different scenes, the group has to work efficiently and accept any useable ideas, as

well, everyone has to be included in each scene. It is also about performance.

- o *Event ideas for facilitator – going to see a concert, breaking into a top secret laboratory, purchasing a special dress, bumping into an old friend/ enemy on the street.*
- o *Other leaders: some groups should be mixed teens and leaders*

If I feel the need for some focus before working in small groups, I will introduce the "Yes" game.

Small Group Games (20 min)
- Sound-scapes (10 min)
    - o In groups of 3 or 4, each group moves out of hearing distance and starts working on making a sound of a place (rainforest, library) with their voices and themselves. Then, the groups meet back together and all the groups lie down on the floor while one group stands around them and makes the sound of their place. The people on the floor have to guess what the place is.
    - o This game is useful in a musical sense because it puts each group into almost a "band" setting where they have to work together to achieve an overall sound and then perform it. At the same time, working in groups allows more shy people to contribute what they want and not have to make the sound-scape sound all themselves.
    - o *Other leaders: some groups should be mixed teens and leaders*
- Graphic scores Pictionary (10 min)[8]
    - o In groups of 4, each group draws a graphic score. As a big group, each group gets the chance to use instruments, or their voices, to try and play any one of the scores drawn, while one member from their group has to guess which score they're playing.
    - o This group game is good as a drama-music hybrid. It uses the dramatic aspects of Pictionary, as the players may have to be more dramatic in expressing each score to get it across to their teammate. As well, it makes each player interpret something through music.
    - o *Other leaders: some groups should be mixed teens and leaders*

Skills (15 min)
- Postcards (5 min)
    - o The facilitator names a place and everyone has to make a postcard of the place by striking a pose, naming what that pose "is" in the place and then, once everyone has posed together, say "welcome to the _(place)_" The facilitator should encourage people to use all levels to make this postcard of the place.

- o This game is good in getting people to think quickly in order to create one, whole, resulting creation. This is useful for music improvisation skills because when everyone plays something, their sound is affecting the overall piece that is played.
  - o A more musical version of this game is "soundscapes"
  - o *Postcard ideas for facilitator: the zoo, a concert, a board meeting, a train station, a bakery, the first human landing on mars, recess*
- This is not a shoe (5 min)
  - o Standing in a circle, there is a shoe in the middle and everyone is encouraged to enter the circle and turn the shoe into something else by moving/using it appropriately and saying "this is a _". To make the game harder, another object can be added.
  - o This game develops the skill of imagination on the spot! It is also good for anyone's process of imagination because no one has to go in the circle and invent the shoe into something at any demanded time, everyone gets to jump in once they have thought of something. This is important because often, I believe, people are scared away from creativity because they believe you have to be creative "enough" or a really creative person all the time to be a creative person. That being said, the facilitator should encourage everyone to take a shot if they notice one or two people haven't done anything yet.
- Reason to leave (5 min)
  - o The facilitator decides a setting and everyone pretends they are there and start milling about. At some point, everyone has to come up with a reason to leave that place, which, preferably, makes sense for the place that it is, i.e. if everyone is meant to be in a library, "oh, I forgot the books I was going to return". This goes on until everyone has "left".
  - o This game is good because, like the other game, it makes people use their imaginations, but there is also no pressure to use your imagination quicker than others.

Big Group Skits/Games (45 min)
- type writer (15 min)
  - o One person is the "type writer" and sits in a chair with an imaginary type writer and starts telling a story. Meanwhile, 2 or 3 other players act out that story and the type writer keeps improvising the story while the players keep improvising the actions. At some point the type writer must end.
  - o This game is good for the end of the class because people get to volunteer to be the type writer, actors, or audience and, by this point, hopefully more people feel comfortable volunteering. Not only will it be fun and force creativity on the players' parts, but finding an ending will introduce a new idea that applies to music (as the facilitator, I might mention that they have to find an ending after a minute or two, so that they don't feel bad when I say, "Ok, time to find an ending")
- Returning item, clerk and customer[5] (10 min)

- One player acts as the clerk of a store while another is a customer returning an object. The "customer" has to leave the room for a second while the audience and the clerk decide what she is returning, then the customer returns back into the room and enters the scene acting as if she is returning an item. The clerk has to give hints as to what the item is by asking questions about why they're returning it. Eventually, the customer has to guess what they are returning.
- This game is good for the end of the class because it is just really fun! The audience usually laughs a lot and almost everyone wants to be the clerk or the customer at some point (in my experience).
- Understudy[6] (10 min)
    - 3 people act out a scene, while everyone else is the audience (the audience may give them a suggested situation to start with). At any point throughout the scene, someone in the audience can yell "freeze" and the actors must freeze where they are. The person who yelled freeze can then replace any one of the actors by patting them on the shoulder and the scene goes on according to that players' interpretation.
    - This game is good for the end of the class because everyone has to be thinking all of the time, but also, it is up to them to step in or present their creative idea whenever they want, by yelling freeze. By this point, hopefully everyone feels that their ideas are accepted by the group, no matter what they may be. However, this game could also be brought in earlier in the class if the facilitator feels that the group is ready to accept others and that they have enough attention-span to sit and watch others perform.
- sound effects[7] (10 min)
    - 2 people act out a scene, with 3 imaginary objects that the audience suggests and they have to use these objects at some point before scene is done. 3 other people have to "play" the sound of those objects when they come into the scene. This game should be repeated as many times as everyone, who wants to, gets a chance to be an actor or sound affect.
    - This game is good because it brings music into the skits trend of the end of the class. It also allows people to pick music or drama, depending on their interests, while all being involved in an improvised piece.

If games go by too fast and there is still some time left over, one might suggest a group "total improv" jam to the class.

Equipment: a shoe, extra instruments, if possible!

Endnotes/game credits

1. I made this up
2. I found this on the Improv Encyclopedia http://improvencyclopedia.org/games/index.html

3. I found this on the Improv Encyclopedia http://improvencyclopedia.org/games/index.html
4. I found this on the Improv Encyclopedia http://improvencyclopedia.org/games/index.html
5. I played this in my high school drama classes
6. I played this in my high school drama classes
7. I made this up
8. We made this up in class
9. Rebecca Caines taught us this one