

Bonding Workshop – Alex Ranahan

(1 minute) **Intro**

WARM UP

(2 minutes) Rubber Chicken –The group gather in either a line or a circle facing the leader. The leader shakes their left hand in the air as if flicking off water and the group copy the action. As the leader does this, the class together count 1 – 10 with each fast shaking of the hand. This is then repeated with the right hand instead, then left foot instead and then right foot instead. Once this sequence has finished, it is then repeated but going down by 2 counts each time the sequence is finished (i.e the first sequence has 10 counts then the next time it has 8 after it has been completed, then 6, 4 then 2). Once it has been completed 5 times, the sequence is repeated with 1 shake of left hand, right hand, left foot, right foot and then everyone jumps up and shakes the body out saying ‘Rubber Chicken!’.

(2 minutes) I Feel the Spirit - Everyone faces the leader. The leader calls out (in a stereotypical American preacher voice) ‘I feel the spirit’ and the class calls it back. This continues until the leader chooses a body part to shake out and shakes it, for example, ‘I feel the spirit in my head!’. The class copies and the cycle repeats.

(5 minutes) Buzzy Bees – The class all separate and move around the room pretending to be bees, making a ‘buzz’ sound and flapping their hands at their sides like small wings. When the teacher calls out a letter, the class all have to try to use their bodies on their own to make the shape of something that begins with that letter in English and freeze in that position. For example if the teacher calls out ‘A’ then students could try to make an airplane, astronaut, ant, avocado, acute angle, angel etc. Whichever shapes look the worst, move or are the least original then the student is out. If any students use the same word (for example, two students both make airplanes) then they are out as well and can help judge the shapes.

(10 minutes) Name Game – In a circle we all take it turns to step forward and say our name to the group and do an action. The group repeat the name and action in a call and response fashion. Once everyone has done this, we then create a rhythm together of a pat on our knees, clap our hands, click right hand then click left. Once the rhythm is established someone says their name on the right click and someone else’s on the left. The person whose name is called then says their own name on the right click and someone else’s on the left to pass on the activity, all in time with the rhythm created by the circle. If people wait too long, say an incorrect name or miss the timing of the rhythm then they have to go on one knee; if they do it again then they have to sit down, and if they do it a third time then they are out and help to police the game to see when people make mistakes.

(10 minutes) Name Tag – The same principles as a game of ‘Tag’ where someone is the person to be avoided and tries to touch people. If someone is touched then they are out of the game and have to make a loud ‘aaaah’ sound before going to the floor then sitting on the outskirts of the area. Before someone is touched (and only if they are about to be touched and are targeted), the target can say the name of someone else who is in the game and then they become the person who has to catch people instead. You are out of the game if you are touched by the person who has the power of the tag or call out an incorrect name or the name of someone out of the game.

(10 minutes) The Wild West - Group standing in a circle. One player starts by pointing any other player and says “BANG”. The player who was pointed (“Shot”) should squat down as soon as possible and the players next to him/her compete in speed to “shoot” the other one before the other one shoots you.

Intermediate version: Instead of saying “BANG” the player can say any topic or subject category such as: car label, capital city, fruit, flower, famous actor etc. so the players next to the “shot” one should quickly name one thing/person from the given category.

(10 minutes) Ninja – In the circle, the aim is to slap the person next to you on their hand. Everyone starts with two hands out as targets; the targets cannot be hidden behind the person’s back, sat on or too high in the air out of reach of other opponents. Around the circle, take it in turns to either attempt to slap someone’s hand in one direct go/one motion or to move away in one movement. Only the person being attacked is able to move/dodge in one direct go/motion from the attacker so everyone else but the attacker and target has to freeze. If you are slapped on a hand then it goes behind your back as dead. Once both hands are slapped then you are out and leave the playing space. If the circle disrupts or breaks from people moving away or attacking on their go then it is up to the players to remember whose turn it is and those out to police it to keep the pace of the game.

(10 minutes) King of the Jungle – Divide the group into smaller circles to make the game faster. In a circle, someone is the King of the Jungle (a Lion) at the head of the circle and the aim is to become the Lion by moving up the ranks of the circle. Every position of the ranks has an animal with an action and a noise. When it is your go you have to do your animal action and noise and then another animal’s action and noise from the game in order to send the energy to them for their turn. If someone takes too long, does not put enough energy into their turn or does an incorrect animal action and noise then they go to the bottom of the rankings and take on that animal’s noise and action instead. Going around anti-clockwise it goes down the ranks of the circle but by getting someone out, everyone beneath them is able to move up one space towards the King and so takes on the action and sound of the animal slot they are filling, whilst the person who was wrong goes to the bottom of the ranks and stands to the right of the King as the lowest animal in the game. Whoever is in the position of the Lion at the start of each round does their Lion action and noise and then another animal of the game’s action and noise to start the round. The animal rankings, actions and noises are as follows:

Lion - Claw your paws twice and say a ‘Roar, Roar’.

Giraffe – Right hand in the air and snap your fingers and thumb together twice like a mouth and say ‘Chomp, Chomp’.

Elephant – With your right arm make an elephant’s trunk and make an elephant noise.

Crocodile – Snap your arms together twice like a crocodile’s mouth and say ‘Snap, Snap’.

Snake – Wave your hand towards right, left, then right like a snake and make a ‘Hiss’ sound.

Horse – Leap up from your chair and thrust your hips forward with a ‘Huh’ sound.

Fox – Scratch your chin with your index finger and thumb together twice and say ‘Cunning, Cunning’.

Rabbit – Make two ears with a hand either side of your head and scrape your foot at the ground twice making the sound of a rabbit eating.

Worm – Flex your index finger from relaxed to pointed three times whilst saying ‘Wriggle, Wriggle, Wriggle’.

Amoeba – Poke your finger and make a popping sound.

DNA – Cross your wrists together 3 times, alternating which sides of the wrist touch, whilst saying ‘uh’ getting higher pitched each time.

WORKING AS AN ENSEMBLE

(5 minutes) Columbian Hypnosis – The teacher picks a volunteer to help demonstrate the activity. To demonstrate power, the teacher places their hand in front of the volunteer’s face and keeps it at the distance of roughly the arm length between a person’s hand and their elbow. The teacher then moves their hand and the volunteer has to keep the same distance between their face and the teacher’s hand and has to angle where they move their head to maintain this. The teacher leads them around the room and plays with levels/heights and speeds before explaining to the class that whilst they had the power, it was not abused and

that they made sure not to injure their partner or make the activity too difficult for them to follow. Now the group are split into pairs and named A and B. A is the leader and B is the follower and so the activity is now continued with these pairings whilst trying to explore, support and challenge their partner. After a couple of minutes, switch the pairings round so now A is the follower and B is the leader. Eventually, bring all pairings back to a line to become an audience and watch as an interesting pairing shows them how they are doing the activity. The class then view this as if it were a performance and comment on the use of status, levels and what roles or characters can be seen and A and B could be playing.

To take this further, create a chain of people by either having one person control two people (one with each hand) or control one person and have them control another person whilst they are being lead themselves. Then the next person who is being lead uses one hand to control someone else at the same time. This repeats making a chain.

(5 minutes) Blind Car - Split the class into pairs that are working together in their showing and name them Partner A and Partner B. Partner A has to close their eyes or cover them with their hands or create a blindfold with a spare item of clothing: they are now a car. Partner B control their car by:

- Pat them on the head gently to honk the horn
- Place a hand on their left shoulder to turn them right
- Place a hand on their right shoulder to turn them left
- Place a finger into their back soft enough not to hurt them but hard enough to be felt clearly.
- Remove the finger from their back to stop the car

It is the job of Partner B to guide the car around without bumping into anything in the class, other students or to injure their partner. The harder the finger in the back is pushed, the faster the car goes. After a few minutes, swap the roles around so now Partner B is the car and Partner A is the driver. This exercise is to build trust that your partner will support you.

(5 minutes) Blind Car Obstacle Course – Using the previous Blind Car exercise, line up the pairs at one side of the room. In front of each pair, place a series of chairs a different distance apart to become the obstacle course. The partner's have to guide their blind car around the chairs to the end of the obstacle course then back round again to the starting position where they have to walk backwards to the finish. Partners may guide the cars around using the same physical instructions as before with a finger in the back to go forward, finger in the back of the head to go backwards and touching opposite shoulder to guide round 90 degrees.

To take this to the next level, the obstacle course is the same as before but no physical instructions are allowed, the partners must guide their car using their voice then swap round at the end.

(5 minutes) Yes And – Split the class into pairs or groups of 3. One person comes up with an idea of something to mime and then they and their partner mime what they have decided to do **together, helping each-other**. Then, after the action has been fully enjoyed and mimed in detail for a brief time, the other partner says 'Yes, and_' and then comes up with another action for them to do. What sets this exercise apart from 'Yes, Let's!' is that the actions and miming have to build on top of each-other, almost like making a story, so that a narrative/piece of theatre is created. For example, Partner A could say 'Let's build a sandcastle'. Partner A and Partner B (and C in some groups) then mime making a sandcastle **together** until they have completed the sandcastle. Then the next Partner says 'Yes and then a woman kicks it over and chases us' so they would both pretend to see the woman kick over the sand castle and then run away until they were both sure they had lost her. Then the next person carries on the story they are creating. For example, Partner A then says 'Yes and then we find gold in the sand'.

(5 minutes) Creating Story Word by Word - Divide group in 2. Students standing in the circle and creating story one by one adding one word at the time. The one in order always has to say all the previous words said before and then add one word. If they forget what has been said, a new story must start from the next person.

(5 minutes) Emotion Orchestra – Create a semi-circle from the class with the teacher in the middle as the conductor. Create groups of 4 people in each group. Give the group an emotion and ask them to create a noise to represent that emotion. Some emotion ideas could include: Fear, Anger, Sadness, Jealousy, Joy, Disgust, Surprise, Trust, Anticipation, Pity and Shame. Whenever the conductor points to a group, they have to make their noise. If the conductor raises a hand up to them, the volume gains; if the conductor lowers the hand then the volume lowers. If the conductor gives a circle motion then the sound continues until stopped with a stop motion of the hand palm-facing to the group. This allows the conductor to create multiple sounds and mix them together. If the conductor uses both hands to raise or lower the volume then that means everyone does as the conductor instructs. A wiping cross made with the hands means silence.

(10 minutes) BREAK

CREATING AN ENSEMBLE

(5 minutes) People to People –

The group gets into pairs and follows the verbal instructions. For example – hand to head, foot to knee, ear to ear.

When they get familiar with each other you can increase the play by saying things like – eyelash to eyelash, finger to lips. When you want them to change partners you say – People to People.

Also add the command ‘Carry’ – one person must lift the other in their pair.

(5 minutes) Zombie Chairs –

Each person places one chair somewhere in the room so that all the chairs are randomly scattered about instead of close together. Then each person sits on their chair. One person leaves their chair and goes to the far end of the room; that person then has to walk towards the empty chair like a zombie and try to sit on it. They can’t run; they have to do a slow relentless zombie walk and make a death-like sound. Everyone else has to stop the zombie sitting on the empty chair. One of them can do this by getting up, moving as fast they like, towards the empty chair and sitting on it. However, once they move they will leave behind another empty chair that the zombie can now walk towards and try to sit on, so someone else has to move onto that chair, leaving behind their empty chair which the zombie can now walk towards. Several people will often leave their chairs at the same time. When this happens the zombie can head towards any of the empty chairs. Once someone has left their chair, they can’t go back to it. When the zombie eventually manages to sit on an empty chair, the game is over, and someone else becomes the zombie.

(10 minutes) Create the Object -

- Everyone moves around the space.
- When an object and number is called, the class have to get into a group of whatever number is called (for example, 4 means 4 people) and make the object out of their bodies.
- If groups don’t have the correct number of people or the object they make doesn’t look good then they are out.
- The best object clusters have people joined physically together and may even have parts that move or make noises (for example, a washing machine makes a washing sound and has a spinning cylinder inside it).

To take it to the next level:

- Add layers once they get used to it, especially younger classes.

- Encourage the students to add fine details such as levels (high, middle and low shapes), moving parts, sounds, facial expressions and using the body to create something it is not (such as a student on another's back as a backpack, or sat on someone as furniture) but it is still a still image and fixed.
- Be careful when encouraging noises from the objects that they are not unnecessary noises to get more points in the exercise nor are using volume as a means of getting more attention. Do not look for volume but instead specificity and creativity.

(10 minutes) Complete The Image -

- Two people enter the space, shake hands and freeze.
- Ask the class what they see and think is happening.
- Then one person leaves the image, making it incomplete; someone else comes into the image doing something different to complete it.
- Now what do the class see? Then the previous person from the image before leaves and a new person completes this new image.
- Repeat this exercise in the small groups.

(10 minutes) Complete the Scene –

- The teacher gives the class a topic, event or scenario that they have to create the image of in the space (for example, a boxing match).
- One person at a time comes into the space and creates a shape or character with their bodies and mime. Once they have frozen into the position, another person comes into the space and works together with what is in the space to build up the image bit-by-bit. For example, one person could be a boxer, then the next person enters the space and either becomes the boxing opponent or a cheerleader or a referee. This encourages students to think of how they can add to the bigger picture or build upon someone else's offering.

(5 minutes) One Chair, Two Characters - Create a semi-circle to then demonstrate how this activity works then mix up the class into pairs. There is one chair in the middle and two characters who both want to sit on that chair. Both characters are really stupid and very easy to mislead to leave the chair. Take it in turns to sit on the chair and the other partner does something to get their partner to leave the chair. Then they sit on the chair and their partner has to do something to get the chair back and the cycle continues. Then swap partners.

(5 minutes) Friends Improvisation – Three people go into the space. Person A enters first to set the scene, followed by B and C. Person A is having a party and gets ready for the party. Person B and C enter the improvised scene and want to come in to the party to achieve an objective (for example eat all the food and make a mess) but Person A doesn't want them to. See what tactics they use to achieve their objective and get what they want.

(5 minutes) Friend Improvisation with Outer Obstacles and Conflict – To develop this activity, we then and repeat the activity but now with different objectives and each person has a direct obstacle as well. For example, Person A wants the guests to leave, Person B will not leave until they get a secret from Person A (there is no secret) and Person C wants to stay but will have to leave if Person B does. There are now stakes of how important it is to achieve the objective because it is now possible to fail.

(10minutes) Scene Improvisation What's On TV –

The class go into the space. The teacher narrates a story, event or scene and they all have to act it out. To take things further, have a student narrate the story. To take things further again, have the scene break out of the TV and come to life without narration. For example, a character turns into a zombie and the class have to

figure out how to save them. Think of objectives, tactics, conflicts and keeping things realistic due to stakes (how much something means to you). You would not immediately want to kill the creature if you thought you could save your friend.

(10 minutes) Balloon Volleyball –

Divide the room in half with either chairs or tables to create a physical line with a certain height (like a volleyball net) so there cannot be any arguments about the rules. Divide the group into pairs to make the teams for the game. The aim is to get the inflated balloon across your side of the court to touch the ground on your opponent's side of the floor. You cannot leave your half of the court. You must serve from half-way across your side facing towards the other team and can only hit the balloon once before your team-mate then has to hit it before you can have a turn to hit it again. If the balloon is hit by the opposite side then anyone can hit the balloon and then has to wait for their team-mate to hit the balloon again before they can have a turn. You may spank the balloon over or under-arm, kick the balloon, hit the balloon at your opponent and hit it in any way as long as you do not cross the 'net' made by the objects or hit it near a wall or difficult to reach outside area of the playing area (the out zone). Anyone can blow the balloon at any time as long as they stay on their side. The balloon is allowed to hit the net but must go over it, if it goes under then the point goes to the team from the other side. The first to 3 or 5 points wins. Once a game is won, the teams swap round until everyone has been with different pairings. This is to promote working together as a team and to take it in turns to work towards a common goal.

(5 minutes) Outro/Walk of Power! – Create a row facing the teacher. Teacher is at the back of the class, students take it in turns to walk towards the teacher catwalk style, doing their most confident or silly walk whilst everyone cheers and claps them. They high-five the teacher and support the others as they take their turn on the catwalk.

If there is time left over or people are waiting for parents then....

Assassin – Two players stand opposite each other. The aim of the game is to shoot your opponent with a loaded gun without being blocked. Each section of the game starts with two pats on your knees (in sync and creating the identical rhythm with your opponent) then you can choose to either load your gun (both hands pointing the thumbs over your shoulders), shoot (both hands make pistols towards your opponent) or block (make a cross with both wrists together facing opponent). You cannot shoot without loading first and you can only block three times in a row before either shooting or loading. If your opponent blocks your shot then you cannot shoot again until you have reloaded. If you both shoot at the same time then it cancels out and you continue the rhythm as before. The rhythm continues between each section. 3 deaths and you are out and move on to the next player. Each winner plays another until they are out, to see who is overall winner in the class.