

Pre-Thinking Games

Particularly when dealing with teenage groups who may be inhibited about sharing their views, or when you are bringing a group together who do not know each other, it's a good idea to get them saying anything before you expect them to say something of consequence.

These games are used in comedy improvisation workshops to relax, create laughter, and get participants feeling creative and unafraid of failure.

Pointing At Stuff

In the first round, players walk around the room pointing at things and declaring loudly what they are. Demonstrate - "Ceiling! Floor! Girl! Boy!" etc.

In the second round, they point at things and say the name of the last thing they pointed at – so if it were the same sequence of objects, "[silence] Ceiling! Floor! Girl!"

In the third round, they point at things and say what they are not, for example, "Antelope! Simon Cowell! Peru!"

Ask participants to come up with their own rules for an extra round.

It's a very quick game but delightfully disorientating.

Ping-Pong Proverbs

Demonstrate with a volunteer. Give/ elicit some examples of proverbs, and then construct one alternating one word each with your volunteer. Starting with always or never is a good idea.

Then get the whole group to pair off and construct their own ping-pong proverbs before hearing some of the funniest, wisest or most bizarre. A good game for overcoming the fear of getting things wrong.

You can also do **Ping Pong Stories**, again constructed one word at a time in pairs. It's best to start with "once upon a time".

Finally, you can do a many-player version, **The Story Orchestra**. Get players in three rows, one sitting on the floor, one on chairs and one standing behind. "Conduct" the Story Orchestra by pointing at different players in turn who each contribute one word to the story.

Yes, and...

Demonstrate with someone confident and positive. Start by making a suggestion, such as "Let's go to the zoo." Your partner responds, "Yes and..." and adds something to the suggestion.

Then you add something else, and so on back and forth.

Or you can go round in a small group or the whole circle.