

Six Socially Distanced Drama Warm-Up Games for Classroom Bubbles

Mirroring

Works best with: pairs

Pick a leader in the pair and face each other (2m apart). Whatever the leader does, the other child has to replicate. It could be speaking, acting out a character or subtle body language. After a few minutes, swap over. This is an easy way to practise focus and observation.

Count Shake

This is an easy way to warm up your bubble. Everyone starts shaking their left hands, counting down from eight. Once the countdown is completed, start again by shaking your right hand, then left foot, then right foot. Now, repeat the sequence but counting down from seven, then six, and so on. Once you've gone all the way down to one, complete the exercise by jumping in the air and shouting, "Shake down!"

Tongue Twisters

Everyone loves a tongue twister. Get warmed up by getting your bubble to practise saying some of these slippery sentences:

Red lorry, yellow lorry. Unique New York. She sells seashells on the seashore. A proper copper coffee pot. If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, how many pickled peppers would Peter Piper pick?

Can you think of more?

Environments

Get all the children to stand in their space and give them a setting or environment - for example, a concert. The children then have to mime being in this setting. For a concert, they might sing and dance. Continue to change the setting they should mime. Can they mime their own and let the bubble guess where they are?

Wrong Words

The aim of this drama game is simple. All you have to do is point at an object and say any word other than that object. A child may point at a chair and say, "Ice cream", for example. It frees up imagination and produces random and funny connections. This is a great drama warm-up game for any age as it encourages children to speak confidently.

Bubblegum

Children mime chewing a ball of bubblegum. Imagine the gum is gradually getting bigger as you move it from side to side in your mouth. Encourage children to really exaggerate their actions to show how creative you can be with simple facial expressions. This is a fun and simple activity that will bring lots of laughs.



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Socially Distanced Drama Games for EYFS Bubbles

Point to the Object

When you shout out an object, children have to point to it or direct your attention towards it. Let the children take turns at having a go at shouting out an object for the bubble to find.

Storm Game

This is a fun activity where your bubble will conjure up the sounds of a storm in your classroom. Start with the wind. Ask children to imitate you as you make a whooshing noise by blowing out air. Next, make some light rain by tapping your fingers on your palm. Make the rain heavier by tapping harder. And complete the storm with thunder by stamping your feet. Then gradually strip everything back as the storm subsides and calmness returns.

Gibberish

When planning EYFS games for drama class, look no further than Gibberish. In pairs or groups, children will communicate using a made-up language. Be as creative and random as you like. The stranger it sounds, the better. It removes the barriers that impede creativity so children embrace randomness and spontaneity, as well as encouraging confident speaking. There is no wrong thing to say!

This Is My Friend

Split children into pairs, spaced at a safe distance. Give them two minutes to find out as much as possible about each other. You could give them hints like favourite foods, colours or hobbies. At the end, each child will tell the class about their partner. This is a good activity to encourage speaking and listening skills.

Quick-Change Artist

One child stands in front of everyone. Encourage your bubble to try and memorise their appearance. Everyone will close their eyes while they change something about their appearance. They might undo a button, remove a bracelet, or tuck in their shirt. There are loads of possibilities. It is up to the rest of the bubble to work out just what has changed. The first person to answer can be the next Quick-Change Artist.

Fish Fingers

One child stands at the front and turns arounds. Another child is chosen to shout 'fish fingers' in the silliest voice they can make. The child at the front then has three guesses to see if they can identify the child who shouted out.

Socially Distanced Drama Games for KS1 Bubbles

Three-Word Sentence Activity

Think of a scenario and assign each child a character. It could be a parent and a child, a shopkeeper and a customer or a teacher and pupil. Whatever you pick, tell the children to improvise a scene using only sentences of three words. It will show them how much is possible, even with limited use of language.

Talking with Names

Two children will have a conversation with one another, using only the other child's name. This will make children get creative with their tone and expression. It is amazing how much meaning they can still convey. See if they can think of a different word to talk with. You could go one step further. This time, children will have a conversation without making a sound. They will have to use facial expressions and body language to express desire and emotion.
And no cheating!

And Then...

The teacher/TA starts off with a sentence, for example, 'The boat set sail from the shore.' Each child will contribute a sentence beginning with, "And then...", that adds to the story: "And then it was in open water...", "And then it started to get windy...". Keep the story going until everyone has had a go and then try and bring it to a conclusion. This game teaches children to work collaboratively, providing answers that allow the story to develop.

Independent Pantomime

Choose a scenario like finding a treasure chest, eating a disgusting meal or driving a car. Each child can find a space to act out the scenario. Acting games are always fun, and doing them independently will help build children's confidence. Children can perform their independent pantomime to the class. The bubble can share what they liked about each performance to build confidence further.

One Word Story

Offer a word to start a story. Going around the class, each person will add a word so the story develops spontaneously. You may start with, "The."
The first child may say, "Shark." the second may say, "Ate." There is no way of predicting what will come next, and the spontaneity of the exercise can produce moments that are as hilarious as they are insightful.

Yes/No Game

Works best with: children taking turns in front of the class
One child stands at the front of the class and is asked questions. The only catch is, they are not allowed to say yes or no in their answers. It gets children thinking more creatively about how to respond to questions. And what is so great is that everyone is bound to slip up at some point. This game is guaranteed to have your class in hysterics!

Socially Distanced Drama Games for KS2 Bubbles

Count to 21

The aim is to count to 21 as a group without two people speaking at the same time. Once someone begins the counting with number one, anyone is free to say the next number. However, if two people speak at the same time, you have to go back to the beginning. It may seem simple, but it can get really tense the closer you get to 21!

The Expert

Give each child in the bubble a number and call out the number of the child who will be the Expert first. Then set a topic for the expert to specialise in. Let's pick jungle animals. Next, set a timer - 30 seconds or a minute is fine. The Expert will have to talk with confidence about the given topic until the time is up. Continue the exercise until everyone has had a go at being the Expert.

Encourage children not to worry if they do not know much about the topic or if they get stuck. What is most important is acting with authority and spontaneity - so coming up with false facts convincingly will add another fun dimension to the game!

Firing Line

Children stand in a safely spaced line with one child, who we will call the Goalie, facing the person at the top. The people in the Firing Line are going to take turns to fire words at the Goalie. It is the Goalie's job to reply with an associated word or phrase and then move down the line to the next child until everyone in the group has contributed a word.

If the Goalie hesitates or says an unrelated word, then the Firing Line has scored a goal and another person can have a go. The main aim of the game is to get children thinking quickly and creatively, however, so you could avoid penalising 'wrong' answers.

Five Things

This game involves quick thinking as each child attempts to name five things that belong to a particular category. For example, the first child could say, "Five foods," and point to a classmate. This classmate then has to name five foods before pointing at a different classmate and choosing a different category, such as "Five items of clothing." If your pupils are finding it difficult to come up with five, then you can always lower it to three, or even one. It will still get children thinking quickly.

"I Went to the Shop and Bought a..."

Starting each sentence with "I went to the shop and bought a...", you will come up with an item for each letter of the alphabet. The further down the alphabet you get, the more difficult it becomes to remember all the items.

On the Spot

Each child will take turns performing in front of the class. Start off with a simple scenario - for example, the child performing imagines they are walking through a shop. Children in the class will take turns suggesting something to integrate into the performance. The child performing will find a way to incorporate the suggestions into their performance.



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Socially Distanced Outdoor Games for Class Bubbles

Popcorn

Everyone imagines they're a piece of corn in a frying pan. Squat on the floor as tight as you can get. As the pan starts heating up, children gradually begin to 'pop' into popcorn. Do this by jumping out of the squat position and clapping. This is an energetic warm-up that is easy to play.

Traffic Lights

As children walk freely around at a safe distance, shout red (freeze), amber (sit down on the floor), or green (start walking again). After you have played with these rules for a while, switch the colours so that green means freeze, red means sit down on the floor and amber means start walking again. This will prompt your class to concentrate and free their minds of anything other than the game.

Follow the Leader

Children stand in a socially distanced line. Everyone must follow and copy the leader of the line (making sure to keep a social distance). Children can take turns to be the leader. Can they move in different ways? Can they move at different speeds?

Led by a String

Start off with the children walking around in a safe space. Next, encourage them to walk as if they were being pulled by a string attached to their nose. Change up the activity by swapping the body part that the string is attached to and see how your pupils respond. The children could choose which part of their body is being pulled - can the bubble correctly guess which body part? What could be pulling them? A super slow snail or a speedy horse?

Flock Dance

Arrange your bubble so there is one socially distanced group of pupils with a leader in front. The leader will start to dance and the rest of the group has to imitate. If the leader moves or the group's direction changes, whoever is at the front of the flock becomes the leader. Do this exercise until everyone who wants a turn at the front has had one.

Freeze

All the class will walk around the space freely. One child is assigned the position that we will call the Freezer. The Freezer turns away, when she turns back to the group everyone must freeze. If the Freezer sees anyone moving, they become a Freezer. Continue until everyone has been caught by the Freezer/s.



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Socially Distanced Circle Games for Class Bubbles

Pass the Zoom

Safely spaced in a circle, children pass an imaginary ball to each other using only eye contact and the word 'zoom'. Children need to stay focused to make sure they don't miss catching the zoom.

Alien, Tiger, Cow

Children have a choice of being one of three creatures:

1. **Alien:** To be an alien, they hold their fingers up in the air and say, "Beep! Beep!"
2. **Tiger:** To be a tiger, they make claws with their hands and roar.
3. **Cow:** To be a cow, they put their fists like horns and 'moo.'

Every few seconds, the teacher gives children a countdown from three to choose which creature to be. Whichever group is in the minority is eliminated from the circle. Carry on the game until there are only one or two children left.

Who Moved?

Everyone sits in a circle except one child who is the Spotter. Get them to look around the circle and try to remember where everyone is sitting. Next, the Spotter leaves the circle and looks away while one child moves to a different place in the circle. When the Spotter comes back to the circle, they have to see if they can spot who has moved. This game develops observational skills - it is fun to play with a teaching bubble.

Cross the Circle

Stand your bubble in a safely spaced circle and number each child either one, two or three. Shout out a number and a role or a characteristic to act out, for example, "Two - dancer," or, "One - tired." When the children hear their number called out, they have to cross the circle acting out whatever role or characteristic you mention. To make it even more interesting, you can say, "One, improvise," and see what children can come up with.

Ribbon of Sound

Children stand safely spaced apart. Pick one child to make a sound. The next child will mimic this sound and it travels around the circle, one child after the other. Once you have completed a full circuit, the next child will then make a different sound that will travel around the circle in the same way. You can repeat the exercise until everyone has started a circuit. This is a great way to energise your bubble.

Copy Cats

Children sit or stand in a safely distanced circle. The first child makes a movement or sound that the other children must then copy. The next child then has a go, but the children have to remember both sounds or actions. This gets more difficult to remember as you go around the circle. This is a great way to keep children focused.