

JULY 5-11, 2016

# TOOLKIT

## THEATRE AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
ERASMUS + PROGRAM

[PIRINEUSCREATIUS.ORG](http://PIRINEUSCREATIUS.ORG)



ERASMUS+  
EUROPEAN COMMISSION



ASSOCIATION FOR ARTS  
AND GROWTH INITIATIVE  
THE STUDIOS

TRANSFORMER  
KASTALIA



LA  
NAVE  
VA  
Teatro y  
Transformación



Fólas  
Soiléir  
Empowering  
lifelong learning



This Toolkit is a result of work and exchange of practices between educators, actors, youth workers and theatre practitioners who took part in the seminar Theatre as a Tool for Social Change, funded by Erasmus + program.

Here you will find a selection of workshops that were presented by participants during “Laboratory experience” sessions, as well as detailed explanation of each step for successful performance of the workshop.

All workshops are open for use by other organizations, however, respecting original source. For any further information and contact, please visit [pirineuscreatus.org](http://pirineuscreatus.org).



edited by Dasha Lavrinienko

Enjoy!



## PROJECT SUMMARY

**Seminar Theatre as a Tool for Social Change** brought together youth workers, trainers, educators, actors and volunteers, who use theatre as a tool in their practice to La Seu d'Urgell in July 2016. The project was coordinated by Associació Pirineus Creatius (Catalonia, Spain). The organization specializes on personal development and social inclusion of young people through artistic activities and creativity.

The project involved 8 organizations from 6 European countries: Spain (Pirineus Creatius, La Nave Va), France (Compagnie Duanama), Ireland (Crooked House Theatre Company, Eolas Soileir), Denmark (Teaterskolen Kastali'a), Romania (A.R.T. Fusion Association) and Bulgaria (AIMI the STUDIOS).

The project consisted of laboratory of experiences, debates, exploration of empathy through reading workshops, establishing background for future cooperation and elaboration of Toolkit you are reading now.

The method of work was based on non-formal education, using games, open spaces, team-building activities in order to create a positive environment for exchange of experiences, practices and new creations.

### Project facilitators



**DIEGO MARÍN ROMERA**

Gestalt therapist and trainer in non formal learning. He is also specialist in Gestalt Theatre applied in work on conflict solving and personal development since 2009. Member of the Pool of Trainers of Council of Europe. He is currently working as trainer for the Regional Youth Institute of Murcia (SPAIN) and for two different NGO's (YAC & EUROACCION) as well as for the Directorate of Youth & Sport of the Council Of Europe. Diego has developed

his work as trainer in the youth field since 1999 within the topic of Intercultural Learning, Immigration, Human Rights Education, Gestalt Therapy in theatre. He collaborates in the development of Training activities for NA. <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toy/diego-marin.411/>



**JOEL PLA GARRIGA**

Actor and theatre teacher. Currently he is working on TV performing a character for children show. He has studied in Theatre School of Barcelona and notwithstanding his young age, has created two different theatre companies in order to develop cultural life in the rural area of Pyrenees and spread Catalan Pyrenees culture to other regions. To do so he is also teaching theatre for youngsters and adults in *La Fusteria Arts Center* with

focus on improvisation and body expression in order to develop self confidence and creativity.



DASHA LAVRINENKO

Educator and Phd student at Barcelona University. Her interests focus on applied theatre, its use in education and in social activism. She studied philosophy and has a Master degree in Cultural Identities. She specializes in music activities for youth, having organized more than a dozen benevolent concerts in Ukraine, France and Catalonia and nowadays working on cultural projects in Alt Urgell region.

#### **Invited professor**



DR. RODRIGO ANDRÉS

Senior Lecturer at the University of Barcelona and a researcher at the Centre Dona I Literatura. Dr. Andrés is currently teaching both an undergraduate senior course and an MA course on the theme “(the limits of) Empathy in American literature”. Leading one of the seminar’s workshop Dr. Andrés worked on both theorizing about the ethical dimensions of the teaching of literary representations of the phenomenon of inter human empathy while, at the same time, he actually tested the potentialities of implementing a pedagogy of empathy and of the values empathy correlates with through the tools of theatre writing, theatre performing, and the teaching and learning through theater.





**Eolas  
Soiléir**

Empowering  
lifelong learning

**TOPIC:** Character Creation and Development

**TYPE OF ACTIVITY:** Creative Writing, Role Play

*Barry McSkeane*

**LEARNING GOALS:** Artistic Learning would include Improvisation, Creative Writing, Character Development. Social and Personal Learning would include Self Awareness, Communication

**MATERIALS:** Minimum 2 Sheets of A4 paper per participant, Pencils/Pens, Small objects to stimulate the creativity (one per participant, eg. a set of keys, a bracelet, a photograph. Anything that could promote the feeling that these items belonged to somebody) Music, soft background music that promote a sense of serenity.

**SPACE REQUIREMENTS:** A large bright space that can comfortably accommodate your group, allowing space to work individually. Walls clear of posters/images where possible.

**SIZE OF THE GROUP:** 15min, 30max

**DURATION:** 2 hours

**PREPARATION:** Before the group arrives, place a sheet of A4 paper folded in half (booklet style) on the floor, along with a pen/pencil, and one of the small objects. Do this for each participant, randomly spaced about the room.

**DESCRIPTION:**

As participants enter, ask them to go to one of the sheets of paper and sit on the floor beside it.

Part One:

Instruct to write the following four headings on each page of the paper.

1. Who am I?
2. What would my friends say about me?
3. What would my parents say about me?
4. What would my enemies say about me?

It is important that you promote honesty in this part of the exercise, we are looking sincere answers, and also instruct the participant that this part of the activity will NOT be shared. Do not collect these from participant, advise them that they will be taking them with them at the end of the day. (allow approx. 10 minutes to complete this)

Part Two:

Ask the participants to pick up the small item beside them, and focus their attention on it, explore it, what is interesting about it. Do not rush this process. Allow silence to give them time to think. Ask participants then to start imagining what sort of person this item might belong to. Follow up with the questions like the following, allowing time (approx. 10 seconds) for thought between each. What is the characters name, age, are they married, in a relationship? Do they have pets? Do they have children? Do they have siblings (brothers/sisters)? Are their parents still alive?

What sort of a person are they? What do they do for a living? What would their friends say about them? What would their parents say about them? What would their enemies say about them?

Why is that object important to them? Who gave it to them? Why did that person give it to them, and why is the other person important to their character?

#### Part Three:

Ask participants to now start to embody this character, and with their eyes closed, to start to physicalize this person, how do they hold themselves, how would they move? Are they physically fit, or have they any ailments/illnesses that might restrict their movement? When ready, ask them to open their eyes and start moving through the space as their character, looking at the other characters as they move, but not speaking to each other. How do they greet others? Are they intimidating, friendly, open, loving?

#### Part Four:

Give participants the second sheet of paper and ask them to return to their space. Instruct them to now write a letter to somebody, as their character, it could be any secondary character, a friend of the character, relation, maybe the person who gave them the object. They have something important to tell this person, something that has been unsaid for a long time, but needs to be said. Alternatively, this could be a diary entry about an issue with someone. (allow 15-20 minutes for this process)

#### Part Five:

Hot Seat with each of the characters. Advise them that you are now going to interact with them as their character. If something is suggested through the process, it's important that they don't reject the offer, but instead go with it (eg. if one of the characters says they are friends with another, that is now true. They can still have a conflict, but they are friends)

Now you will ask them all the questions that you asked them to think about earlier. As the facilitator, you must interact with the character at react to the character as they are. If they are shy, try to coax them, if they are aggressive in their manner, feel free to be so too. Don't be afraid to be devil's advocate either, and challenge their (the characters) opinions where you think it's necessary.

Questions will include; name; age; relationships; parents; occupation; favourite artist; band; movie; book; cats or dogs; pets; children; names; brothers/sisters? Names? How long have people been working in their jobs

Also promote relationship development. That is, ask if they know any other characters in the room. If they state that they know or are related to each another this then becomes part of both characters reality.

#### Alternatives:

This workshop and the energy can easily be dictated by using imagery and music. Eg, if you wish to focus on a topic, such as conflict/war, images of war around the walls will help influence the energy

#### Debriefing:

Allow adequate time for the participants to share the letter that they wrote. This can almost have a performance element, and again, the use of music can add to the readings. Following this, ask the participants to step outside their characters, and now discuss the process. Allow adequate time for this also. You want to explore what they found about themselves/characters through this. Did anything they discover surprise them?

#### Ending:

It's important to remind participants to leave their 'character' and their issues in the workshop room. Finish by playing a high energy group activity.



**TOPIC:** A play about the stories of the five characters, reflecting the dramas and dilemmas of the migrants concerning belonging, negotiating identities, nationalism, institutional bureaucracy, distant people, loneliness, inability to adjust to an unjust context etc.

*Andrei Serban*



**TYPE OF ACTIVITY:** Performance/Social-Political-Documentary Theatre

**LEARNING GOALS:** this workshop aims to archive, document and debate, through theatre performances and workshops, histories which are often marginalized within those systems which manufacture their own legitimating narratives in order to justify their alliance with a “convenient history”. We aim to reveal personal histories of those who are nowhere to be found in the textbooks, conferences, treaties and politically charged opinions which serve the grand narrative of the system adopting a single history, “the history of obedience” before the power structures.

**DURATION:** 1h.40 min

**MATERIALS:** none

**SPACE REQUIREMENTS:** a space where 5 actors can fit, no need for stage

**IDEAL SIZE OF GROUP:** 20 people+

**DESCRIPTION:** The performance Born in the Wrong Place intertwines the life stories of 5 people who have gone through the experience of seeking asylum with fragments from The Guide to Obtaining Romanian Citizenship for Foreign Citizens. The performance aims to problematize and discuss in the public sphere issues which are of crucial importance in the current global context, issues such as the institutional fight against migration taking place at the same time as the need for migrants in the development of the capitalist economy grows, the need for asylum, the right to travel as the fundamental right of every individual and the instrumentalization of “the foreigner” as a scapegoat for social and economic issues.

[DOWNLOAD THE PLAY TEXT HERE](#)

**TOPIC:** Image Theatre

*Alexandra Tomesku*

**TYPE OF ACTIVITY:** simulation

**DURATION:** 50 min

**MATERIALS:** markers, pens, flip-chart and A4 paper

**SPACE:** Preferable a big room

**TARGET GROUP:** any

**SIZE OF THE GROUP:** min 5 – max 14



**Statues and emotions (warm up):**

Works with body postures and helps the group express different emotions by using their body. Prepares the group for later phases in working with body postures and expression of different emotions.

The group is divided in 2- participants can count 1 -2 – so each member is either 1 or either 2. Then it is explained that they have to walk around the space in silence and at some point the facilitator will say out loud one number (either 1 or 2) and an emotion/feeling/mood. All the people that have that number have to freeze in a statue that expresses that specific emotion (wherever they are at the moment in the space).

The other half of the group in that moment is present in a spontaneous museum and are invited to observe the “pieces” of that thematic museum. They stay for a couple of seconds- they are encouraged to make sure they have a look and observe all the statues. They are also requested not to touch or interact with the statues.

The group needs to be reminded if they are having too much fun and they are touching the statues or are trying to make them laugh. The facilitator closes the museum and then all the people continue to walk around the space and the exercise continues by saying again a number and an emotion. (It is advisable to do at least 3 rounds for each number group). Suggestions for emotions that could be used: sad, happy, proud, afraid, frustrated, dreamer, troubled, powerful, powerless, etc.

**Images of oppression**

**Aims** to narrow down the potential situations that could be included in the Image Theatre performance, to help the group to identify the key actors in a situation of oppression, to understand more deeply the most important type of oppression.

**Description**

The facilitator explains to the group the structure of roles that we use in Image Theatre (oppressor, oppressed, ally on each side, neutral persons) which of course are based on how the problem is reflected in reality. They go to their group and discuss the kind of oppression chosen. Now they can share more examples from the same category.

In this part of the discussion the facilitator needs to be very careful in his approach, as everybody in the group should feel free to talk at any time, nobody should impose his/hers opinion and based on the arguments they present the decision will be taken as a group (by consensus).



Their task is to make an image of one concrete example of the oppression where they have to portray all the characters/actors relevant for the situation – oppressed, oppressor, allies, neutral. They show this image to the others.

It is very important to stress the fact that all the sharing that is happening in the group has to come from reality and that the example they show in the image has to be a real example and not created/invented by them. For this part around 20 minutes are allocated.

**It is not allowed** under any circumstances to invent or to make assumptions about any situation. We stress these aspects very much because very often the group member can fall into this trap – mostly fed by rumors, media and gossip on certain topics.

We cannot imagine an oppression happens – we need to know how it happens for real. The role of the facilitator is crucial- to constantly remind the group about the reality check and that we will not advance in the process if we don't work with reality. If the group is stuck don't take the easy way out by accepting faking reality – allow more time for research and for getting in touch with the reality of the problem you want to work with.

Observations and sharing of the reality the way they experience it, from the angle of kinds of oppression that exist, are in fact the routes for making a decision on what topic to work with. Now they probably have many reflections in terms of how the oppression could be approached through this method.

One by one they are shown to the others (in the case of smaller groups where there is no public – they show and then discuss it). The public is invited to identify the roles, the context, and to make the connection with reality (if indeed cases like that are happening or not).

The facilitator has to guide this discussion with the public.

After all the images were shown a few questions could be addressed to the group:

Which type of oppression was the clearest from your perspective?

In which one was the imbalance of power the biggest?

What other comments do you have after you have seen the images?

The transfer phase in the facilitators work is very important!!! At the end, before the closure, the facilitator asks the public how they can use all these ideas in their own community, or what they have learnt from this performance – let more members of the public share their ideas (they can be briefly written in the observation sheet mentioned in the documentation).

**TOPIC:** The acting method of Michael Chekhov

**TYPE OF ACTIVITY:** Methodological Approach

**LEARNING GOALS:** How to flesh out a Character

**DURATION:** From 45 min to 2 hours, ideally one hour

**MATERIALS:** Optional props - clothing such as shoes, hats, scarves, also walking sticks, glasses, make-up etc, but none of this is necessary for the success of the workshop.

**SPACE REQUIREMENTS:** Empty space, size in relation to the numbers in the group.

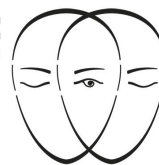
**SIZE OF GROUP:** From 5 to 30, ideally 15 approx.

**DESCRIPTION:**

- Give the group biographical information about Michael Chekhov.
- Give the group information about his method - who uses it and why, examples etc.
- Tell the participants to walk freely in the space.
- Tell them to explore how it would feel and how would it change their body movement if: their hair was really really long, if one of their legs was shorter than the other, if they had no teeth, if their center of gravity was in the point of their nose or in their belly or in one of their shoulders etc (prompts should always concern something external, something physical, rather than dealing with emotions or concepts)
- Duration: not less than 15 min. Give them time to explore the sensation
- Give the participants one male and one female short monologue from a play that they already know.
- Make them find out five, seven, ten details about the physical appearance of their character (they are allowed to use information from the whole play, not just from the short piece, and they can draw conclusions about the physical characteristics also from the actions of the character, occupation, lifestyle etc.
- Ask the participants to choose one detail and to explore how it changes their physique and their self-esteem. (Give enough time to explore this properly. This detail that they will choose is the core of their character and they will build their whole character from this basis so they should choose a characteristic with real significance for them.)
- Ask the participants to explore how this quality changes their walk, the way they look, and the tone of their voice (they can use the short monologue).
- Ask them to choose one -very -clear - gesture - that defines this character .
- Ask them to show their gesture one by one repeatedly without stopping until the facilitator says stop. They should explore what effect this repeated gesture has on their emotions. (During this exercise the gestures can be modified if the participant wishes, ie more intense, smaller, bigger etc but only if they feel it necessary.)
- Duration not less than one hour if the group is big it can last for two days

**DEBRIFING:** not necessary.

Асоциация за изкуство и  
младежки инициативи  
СТУДИЯТА



association for arts  
and youth initiatives  
THE STUDIOS

*Borislava Stratieva*

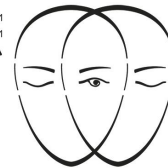


*Georgi Georgiev*

**TOPIC:** Voice and music

**TYPE OF ACTIVITY (SIMULATION, MEDITATION, ROLE PLAY):** Vocal training

Асоциация за изкуство и  
младежки инициативи  
СТУДИЯТА



association for arts  
and youth initiatives  
THE STUDIOS

**LEARNING GOALS:**

- ✓ Preparation of voice and body for speech and singing
- ✓ Liberation of one's strong voice and self-esteem improvement
- ✓ Protection of vocal damage
- ✓ Increase of interest in vocal art

**DURATION:** 45 – 60 minutes

**MATERIALS:**

- ✓ Comfortable clothes and shoes/barefoot
- ✓ Drinking water (room temperature)
- ✓ Optional - piano (synthesizer)

**SPACE REQUIREMENTS:** Wide closed space (alternative: open space, silent or nature sounds (non urban))

- ✓ Pleasant temperature and low humidity
- ✓ Fresh air, no direct air conditioning

**TARGET GROUP (AGE):** 12+ (7+ if adjusted)

**SIZE OF THE GROUP:** 5 – 16 participants

**DESCRIPTION:**

\* Explain the working posture. It is very important to be generally in the following position during the whole training (except when the form of the body in a specific exercise doesn't require other):

- feet get into parallel position (toes and heels equidistant at a shoulder's width);
- soft knees (not bended nor "locked" into straight line);
- pelvis centered;
- spine – straight and upwards;
- "long neck" sensation: as if the head is a balloon filled with helium and "wants to fly up", but not pulling or stretching;
- arms hanging heavy aside the body as if wearing iron gloves.

Warm up

➤ **Physical (joints and skeletal muscles)**

You arrange the group in a circle and start with easy movement beginning with joints (rotation) of the feet, followed by knees, hips, spine, neck, shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers. Second – muscle stretching (easy and careful: feet (arches), calves, thighs, belly and chest, arms and neck (Extremely careful))

➤ **Articulation (mouth, cheeks, tongue, throat, facial (mimic) muscles)**

\* Here we still don't include voice sound, only the lateral airy noise is audible.

- ✓ Slow stretching of face by opening and closing the jaw, followed by "making funny/scary faces, open(happy)/closed(frown/sad) and the more dynamically;
- ✓ Blow cheeks. Swish air inside mouth as if mouthwash;
- ✓ Circles with the tip of the tongue inside mouth cavity (one/other side, one/other direction. Alternation. Chewing of the tongue. Sticking tongue out. Licking your lips;
- ✓ Swallow. Yawn – silently with mouth closed and with common sound and wide opened;
- ✓ Lip roll (support cheeks if heavy with tips of the index fingers) – blow air through closed lips as if they're forming "m", but a little bit of a "duck face", but no sound from vocal chords, just airy noise. Repeat;
- ✓ Massage whole face with fingertips. Relax face as if "melting wax";

### ➤ **Breathing**

- \* Explain the group about differences between "chest" breathing (or "high") and "stomach" breathing (or "low", diaphragm, floating ribs) and suggest to use "low" in general if/when possible.
- ✓ Slowly inhale and exhale with raising arms from the sides up and straight while intake and down on exhale in the rhythmic structure of 4 counts up (inhale), 4 stop/pause when up (air in), 4 counts down (exhale) and 4 stop/pause when down (airless). Repeat few circles;
- ✓ "Dog breathing" – short and fast gasps of air with the tongue out while changing the mouth form from "ah" to "ae" and from "oh" to "ooh". No sound. Moist mouth and throat by swallowing or just a sip of water;
- ✓ Exhale through a straw (or little gap between lips as if there is a straw):
  - long and gentle, but constant;
  - short and sharp, powerful, rhythmic repeatedly until breath;
- ✓ Exhale sharply with gasps through the sound of "F" rhythmically as if pumping a tire. Change the sound then into "s" with the same imagination;
- ✓ Rotation (semi fast, repeated alternation left/right) of the upper body with arms gradually spreading and lifting from a "hugging yourself" position to "holding a fictional stick above your head" position no elbows bend and following the pattern of inhaling while facing ahead (center) and exhaling while in lateral position (each side) through nose as if wringing a sponge – let all air out with the help of the twisting motion. Remind to warn to be aware and take care for back, abdominal muscles and in general.

### Voice

#### ➤ **Adding sound to 1. c. (Breathing)**

- \*Add sound to "lip roll" and thus transform it into "horse buzz";
- ✓ "Starting an engine": imagine you are a car engine and in the winter it has troubles starting. Making the "v" sound (upper frontal teeth and lower lip) and pulsating with diaphragm pushes of air imitate the sound of this trying (for a minute) and, eventually succeeding turning on engine. When "it is on", you go on with the sound of a driving car (or formula 1 chasing) changing the gear and speed (thus the pitch goes up and down). The sound is constant "v";



- ✓ “Buzzing” – long exhales with vibrating consonants: “zzz” (“s”+ sound), “bbb” (“p”+ sound), “zh” (like in “treasure”), “mmm” (like a cow’s moo-ing), “nnn”. While doing this, “walk around” the sound through your body and resonating bones and cavities (imagine it traveling in your belly, chest, mouth cavity, nose, forehead, center head and backwards and the hard palate);
- ✓ Long exhale with vocal of between “ah” and “oh” – open mouth for “oh” and say “ah” like in the English word “ought”. Try to produce stable, consistent sound with equal quality and quantity during the whole exhaling. Sometimes this association helps: imagine as if you are Heavy Smoke machine and you are filling this space with thick fog through your mouth. Be serious and powerful as in a ritual. Repeat the exercise few times. Alternate between the sounds of the word “yeah” adding at the end “oh” in the consequent order as the following: “ee”, “eah”, “ah”, “oh” (as in “ought”) and “oo” (as in “soon”), and then again from the beginning in a circle (the connection between the end and the beginning should sound like the French affirmative word “Oui”: “Yeah”+“Oh”+“Oui”+“Yeah”+“Oh”+“Oui”...). Remember (remind) the trainees that the sound of the whole exhaling should be equal in quantity and quality and the transition between sounds seamless, as if vowels don’t change.

### **Freeing of the voice (games)**

- ✧ “African chant”. People are arranged in a circle. They start a movement as if digging with a shovel in front of them in one spot in the measurement of 4/4 (or just wagging on one and the other foot (two beats per side, approximately 120 bpm)). Without stopping the movement, “singing” or “shout outs” start: one “offers/introduces” a melody or a sound or short cry in one bar (4 beats) and all repeat the same in the next bar (4 beats). Then it’s the next person’s turn and so on in the circle. The machine doesn’t stop.
- ✧ “Throwing a sound”. People are in circle. With imagination and liberation, each “sculpts” an imaginary ball or any object with their hands accompanied with the “matching” sound – depending on the material, size, shape of the forming object. It may vary in shape, size, weight, origin, organic... After the object is completed, it’s been thrown to a specific (determined and fixed with a look) person somewhere in the circle, again accompanied with the sound of its flight (short and sudden or long and floating, playful or straight...). It is important to connect the thought and intention with the path and the sound of that specific object and the recipient. You voice the “materialized” intention, illustrate with vocal sound the whole travel of the ball/object. The very end of the travel (the catch) matches with the end of the sound.
- ✧ “Chain of sound”. One produces sound and “gives” it to the next person in the circle; the next overlaps, crossfades, takes over the sound imitating it, and then transforms it into their own, new and different and passes on to the next person.

### **Debriefing (questions for reflection)**

- Discuss about physical problems in the organs (throat, vocal chords, diaphragm, head, muscles...);
- Discuss the mentality of the whole process (the reason) and the emotions (reaction and/or instinct);
- Brainstorm new and/or corrections/improvements of exercises.

**TOPIC:** Prevention of Bullying

**TYPE OF ACTIVITY:** Trust building, tactile massage

**LEARNING GOALS:**

Inclusion  
Building concentration

**DURATION:** 15-20 min depending on the group's age and concentration level.

**MATERIALS:** 1. A story with movements which fit the story-line. (For example a story about friendship,) 2. pillows, 3. quiet music

**SPACE REQUIREMENTS:** empty room

**TARGET GROUP:** children, youth

**SIZE OF THE GROUP:** 2 -30

**DESCRIPTION:** divide participants in couples. It is important you are the one to choose who is together. Each couple sits on a pillow on the floor. One is sitting in front of the other in a position to get massaged on the back. The music is playing in the background. When the kids are quiet you start. Start by telling the one which is giving the massage to start massaging the shoulders. Then you start telling the story and showing the movements to do on the back. In the middle of the story the kids switch places and the one who was giving the massage before is now receiving it.

**Notes :**

1. Because we're the one to choose the couples conflicts can happen. Sometimes the kids don't want to be together. It often helps if you use yourself and sit down with them (so you become 3 instead of 2). After a while they can be together without you.
2. When choosing the story, look for one which gives possibilities in terms of massage movements. For instance if in the story it is raining, the children will do little gentle movements to suggestion rain. If in the story someone is walking, the children will do little walking movements with their fingers on the back of their partner. It is important for the leader to plan these movements in advance.



*Cecilie Hornemann Norrelund*



*Diego Marín Romera*

**TOPIC:** Impro Theatre on Emotions

**OBJECTIVES:**

- to develop skills for emotions' recognition and understanding
- to develop empathy towards others
- to analyze emotions and their different expressions



**DURATION:** 1 hour

**SPACE REQUIREMENTS/MATERIALS:** None

**GROUP SIZE:** 10 to 25

**DESCRIPTION:**

Facilitators prepare two situations that are familiar to participants and to which they can easily connect (eg. bullying, family discussion, sexual approach for adolescents; etc.). Each situation must be specific and simple to understand (eg. a mother and father discuss the time their daughter should come back home after going out) .

The participants are asked to sit leaving a free space for the "stage". One facilitator introduce and facilitate the activity meanwhile the other two (or more) will be the protagonist of the improvisation.

The facilitators/actors improvise a theatre scene starting from the prepared situations. The rules for impro theatre the "actors" must follow are:

- 1) it is forbidden to harm yourself or the other;
- 2) explicit sex or sexual behaviours are not allowed;
- 3) it is forbidden to cause any damage to the space.

The facilitator stops the impro scene after few minutes in one of its most dramatic/intense moments. At the stop signal actors freeze keeping still their positions.

The facilitator then invites participants to stand up, touch one of the characters and say what he/she thinks and feels.

After few rounds the facilitator asks the participants if any of them would like to enter the scene (that is still frozen) and substitute one of the characters to play the end of the scene. The substitution may be done different times but always restarting from the frozen moment.

At the end the actors, still playing their characters, sit in front of the group and the facilitator invites the participants to ask them question on their behaviours, emotions, etc.

**OBSERVATIONS (FEEDBACK, TIPS):**

The selected situation of each improvisation must be simple and realistic.

The actors must respect the rules of the impro theatre.

It is advisable to explicitly and commonly "get rid of the roles" at the end of the activity in order for the facilitators/actors to leave their characters behind and for the participants to understand clearly the end of the theatrical improvisation.

## **TOPIC: River of my Life.<sup>1</sup>**

### **DESCRIPTION:**

**Drawing the river:** (20 min) Participants start working individually in order to draw their own River of my Life. The river will symbolize their life process since they can remember. They are invited to be as explicit and detailed as they want (and can) to illustrate different moments of their life. For instance, they can draw a peaceful backwater meaning an easy or/and peaceful moment or some rapids when not so quiet moments took place in a short time or/and it was very relevant for the participant. The different elements drawn in the river can symbolize different people, situations, or emotions for the participant.

### **Sharing in trios:** (30 min)

After drawing their own river, people will make trios (it could be the same peer trios) to share their own rivers. Possible questions that may guide their discussion:

- a. Share your river with your trio as far as you are able to do it comfortably, do not feel force to open up issues you don't feel like sharing.

### **Debriefing:** (40 min)

Finally, a debriefing in plenary will serve the purpose of sharing in the group some impressions, feelings and opinions about the process so far.

Possible questions for the debriefing:

- a. How did you feel doing this activity?
- b. How would you describe in general your own river?
- c. How was for you to reflect on your own life?
- d. Has anything changed in your way of seeing it and what still remains challenging at that point?
- e. Can you identify any insights from the activity?

Note: Trainers are also invited to draw and share their own river.

---

<sup>1</sup> Original activity developed by (Diego Marín & Laimonas Raiguskas) within the frame of the Learning to learn Project organized by IKAB, 2008-2011 with the support of the Grundtvig Programme of the EU Commission



**TOPIC: Warm up, rhythm games and body improvisations**

*\*Good way to warm up before theatrical activities*

**TOPICS:** Gender, social skills

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ⇒ To prepare participants for the further work with theatre
- ⇒ To make participants feel safe in the group
- ⇒ To make participants aware of their body

**DURATION:** from 2 to 30 minutes

**SPACE REQUIREMENTS:** Preferably a large room for the participants to move freely

**GROUP SIZE:** any

**1. In a circle - Clapping our hands like an orchestra.**

Ask participants to form different groups. Each group is given with their hands. One person becomes the maestro and directs the orchestra.

**2. In a circle - Rhythm and names.**

The facilitator gives a rhythmical motive, and the whole group follows. The participants clap their hands on their thighs two times and then their fingers two times, so that the following sequence is achieved in 4/4: thighs-thighs, fingers-fingers, thighs-thighs, fingers-fingers, etc.

Then, when clapping ask participants to repeat their names to have a combination of voice and rhythm in the following sequence: thighs -thighs/ my name-my name, fingers- fingers/my name, the name of someone else in the group.

The one that hears his/her name has to continue with the game, without losing the rhythm.

**3. In a circle - Zip-Zap-Zop**

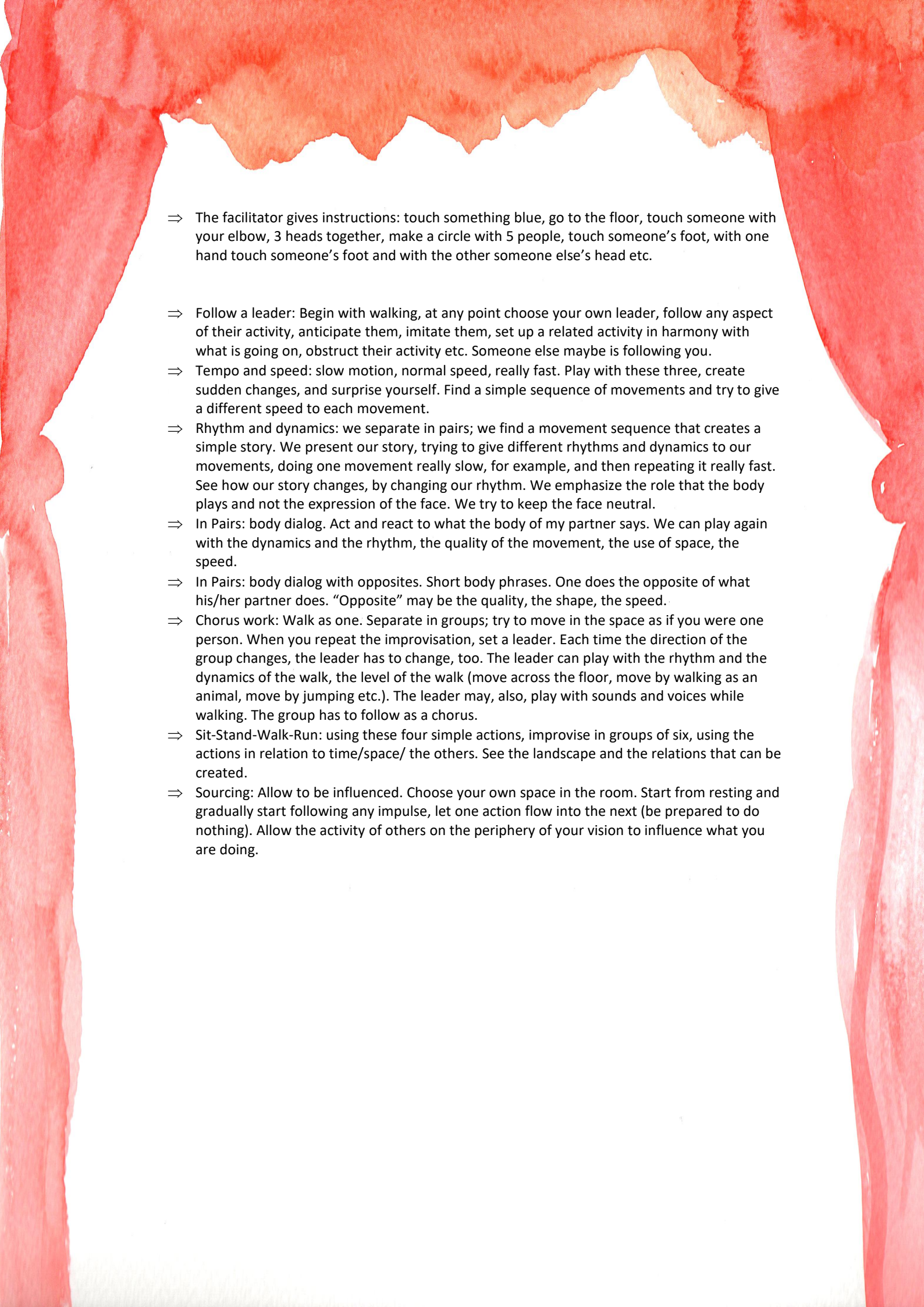
The word "Zip" passes round the circle from one to the other, with the voice, the head and a movement of the hands, too. I take the "Zip" from the one that stands on my left and pass it quickly to the one that stands on my right. We are free to change the flow of the circle, by giving the word "Zap" to the one that stands on our left. So, for example, I may give "Zip" to the one standing on my right and he/she may change the circle's flow by giving me back a "Zap". If someone wants to stop the flow he/she says "Zop". Then, we can either change the flow of the circle, or insist until the "Zop" becomes either a "Zip" or a "Zap". This game is quick and it aims at a continuous rhythm with quick changes.

**4. In a circle - 1-20**

The aim of the game is for the team to count from 1 to 20, without two people speaking together. If two or more voices are heard together, the game starts from the beginning. The game aims at concentration and it introduces the idea of 'giving space' to others. You may want to ask participants to close their eyes while playing the game.

**5. Body improvisations**

- ⇒ Walking forwards, backwards, around, slowly, with interruptions, sideways, to and from, stepping high, low, heavy, pause and stay in stillness, allow patterns to develop, run fast, sudden changes of direction, everywhere in the room, between two points, note the light, shadow, smell, temperature of the room, listen to the sounds, in or out of the room, come in groups, empty the space etc.

- 
- A decorative border made of red watercolor paint, with a torn-paper-like edge, frames the top and sides of the page.
- ⇒ The facilitator gives instructions: touch something blue, go to the floor, touch someone with your elbow, 3 heads together, make a circle with 5 people, touch someone's foot, with one hand touch someone's foot and with the other someone else's head etc.
  - ⇒ Follow a leader: Begin with walking, at any point choose your own leader, follow any aspect of their activity, anticipate them, imitate them, set up a related activity in harmony with what is going on, obstruct their activity etc. Someone else maybe is following you.
  - ⇒ Tempo and speed: slow motion, normal speed, really fast. Play with these three, create sudden changes, and surprise yourself. Find a simple sequence of movements and try to give a different speed to each movement.
  - ⇒ Rhythm and dynamics: we separate in pairs; we find a movement sequence that creates a simple story. We present our story, trying to give different rhythms and dynamics to our movements, doing one movement really slow, for example, and then repeating it really fast. See how our story changes, by changing our rhythm. We emphasize the role that the body plays and not the expression of the face. We try to keep the face neutral.
  - ⇒ In Pairs: body dialog. Act and react to what the body of my partner says. We can play again with the dynamics and the rhythm, the quality of the movement, the use of space, the speed.
  - ⇒ In Pairs: body dialog with opposites. Short body phrases. One does the opposite of what his/her partner does. "Opposite" may be the quality, the shape, the speed.
  - ⇒ Chorus work: Walk as one. Separate in groups; try to move in the space as if you were one person. When you repeat the improvisation, set a leader. Each time the direction of the group changes, the leader has to change, too. The leader can play with the rhythm and the dynamics of the walk, the level of the walk (move across the floor, move by walking as an animal, move by jumping etc.). The leader may, also, play with sounds and voices while walking. The group has to follow as a chorus.
  - ⇒ Sit-Stand-Walk-Run: using these four simple actions, improvise in groups of six, using the actions in relation to time/space/ the others. See the landscape and the relations that can be created.
  - ⇒ Sourcing: Allow to be influenced. Choose your own space in the room. Start from resting and gradually start following any impulse, let one action flow into the next (be prepared to do nothing). Allow the activity of others on the periphery of your vision to influence what you are doing.



**OPIC:** Adapting to change.

**TYPE OF ACTIVITY:** Team work

*Sean Holland O'Brien*  
*Rob Doran*

**LEARNING GOALS:** For the participants to realize by changing and adapting themselves they can in turn bring change to their own communities, be it a small change or large.

**DURATION:** Duration: recommended time is 35-45 minutes.

**MATERIALS:** Intelligence.

**SPACE REQUIREMENTS:** Dependent on the size of group.

**IDEAL SIZE OF THE GROUP:** 12-24 participants



**DESCRIPTION:**

- Gather the participants into a circle and instruct them to create a movement that represents that person as an individual with their name attached to it, get everyone to perform them in front of the group, after doing so put them back into the circle. This process should only take 5 minutes or so. (The first step is to show how an individual can survive on his/her own, alone).
- When they are back in the circle explain that they are to go into a pair and to blend their movement together as if it was one and at the end to have a new movement, a short action that represents the two people, get them to perform and then back into the circle. The step should take up to 10 minutes. (This step is to represent a small community, for example a family).
- Put two pairs into the same group making a four-person group and then get them to drop their end movement and make one for the four of them, have them perform this in front everyone and after get them to back into the circle. Give 15 minutes to do this task. (We do this to show a larger group of people, for example a school, or a work environment).
- Make one group, merge all of the groups together and have the participants put all of these movements into one giant movement that's alive and only give them a short amount of time to simulate the sense of urgency that might happen in a community and how you have to adapt and work together to fix a problem. You should only give 5 minutes to your group to do this task to really create a panic with them. (Whether they are ready or not you should make the group do it).
- You have them sit down after it and you ask them, what they thought the exercise might have been about, and when done you explain what the workshop is about and explain as so in the debriefing.

**DEBRIEFING:**

This workshop exercise is about a few things, the first thing that it shows is how we are able to survive on our own but that no progress is made with one person and if we were to do this and not communicate or work together with anyone we would eventually die off. The exercises first and most prominent thing it shows is that we as people thrive with other people, all throughout history by working together and adapting the way we think we have made progress and this exercise shows why that has been the case so clearly. The workshop also shows a prime example that in life you are going to have the chance of failure and that's okay and is about accepting that possibility.

**ACTIVITY OUTLINE: SWIMMY THE FISH**

(based on the tale of Leo Lionni)

**TOPIC:** Multiculturalism, integration, interculturalism, culture

**TYPE OF ACTIVITY:** Process Drama (Pretext Drama)

**LEARNING GOALS:**

- team building, cohesion of the group
- creativity
- introduce role play
- discuss about the story to understand our reality through a dilemma
- enjoyment

**DURATION:** 1h15

**MATERIALS:**

- Soft scarf
- Any element to represent Swimmy or the story
- Music

**SPACE REQUIREMENTS:**

- Spacious room without objects (chairs, tables,...)
- Enough size for the group to move freely

**SIZE OF THE GROUP:** minimum 9

**DESCRIPTION:**

**1-Introduction to the group – Facilitator - 3 minutes**

In this first step the facilitator explain how long it's going to take the session and how it will work. We will work with a story in which you will participate in different ways: sometimes being part of the story, sometimes making some activities to make sure the story can go through.

**2-Introduction of what is the story about and presentation of the element - Facilitator 2 minutes**

*"Today we are going to play the story of Swimmy the fish. Would you like to know Swimmy.? Here you have Swimmy. He is very little and now a little bit afraid because he doesn't know you. But don't worry because we are going to discover so many things of his story".*

We hide him again (in a box, covering him with a scarf or whatever you like).

**3- Creating the atmosphere of seabed – Facilitator - 5 minutes**

In this step we will prepare a relaxation-visualization (eyes close) of the seabed with music (I recommend you the music of the movie "The Big Blue"). Meanwhile we make a very neutral-basic description of the place to make sure that the group can imagine their own seabed. Every person can choose the position but it has to be comfortable and if possible laying down.

At the end of relaxation we invite the group to transform their bodies in bubbles and little by little discover the space and the other bubbles.

*Elisabet Aznar Santamaria*

*Elisa Ballardin*





#### **4- Creating physical creatures of the sea in groups – All group in role - 15 minutes**

At this step we make groups of bubbles. The facilitator decides the size of the groups depending the size of the group.

Groups of x: we create a jellyfish all together that can move

Groups of x: we create a crab altogether that can move

Groups of x: we create a seahorse altogether that can move

Finally we make groups of x to create other sea creatures (can not be any fish)- They can be inspired by creatures that already exist (seaweed, starfish, placton,...). Also is important that this creature has movement and a sound that starts and finishes and can be repeated several times.

When each group has already their creatures, they show to the other groups.

#### **5- Presentation of Swimmy - Facilitator in role of Swimmy - 5 minutes**

It can be useful to have an element, easy to put on, that represents Swimmy. For example: a scarf. The different groups stay together.

Music (swim style with rhythm)

Facilitator in role: *"Hello I'm Swimmy"* He starts dancing and visiting the different groups showing them how it's his movement with his music.

#### **6- Swimmy and his tribe - All group in role - 3 minutes**

The whole group makes a diamond. Music of Swimmy. The group starts following the facilitator with Swimmy movements and when the facilitator changes direction to one of the angles. The whole group follows that angle.

#### **7- The big Tuna - Facilitator in role of storyteller - 12 minutes**

*"But one day a big big tuna arrived to the seabed Swimmy's area. Tuna was very hungry and decided to chase Swimmy's tribe and eat them. Swimmy was very lucky and he could escape from Tuna. He found a cave to be hiding! He stayed there for 8 days trying to decide what to do. Finally he decided what to do. He had two ideas in mind that he would try"*

Teacher in role of Swimmy and the group in role of sea creatures.

Action

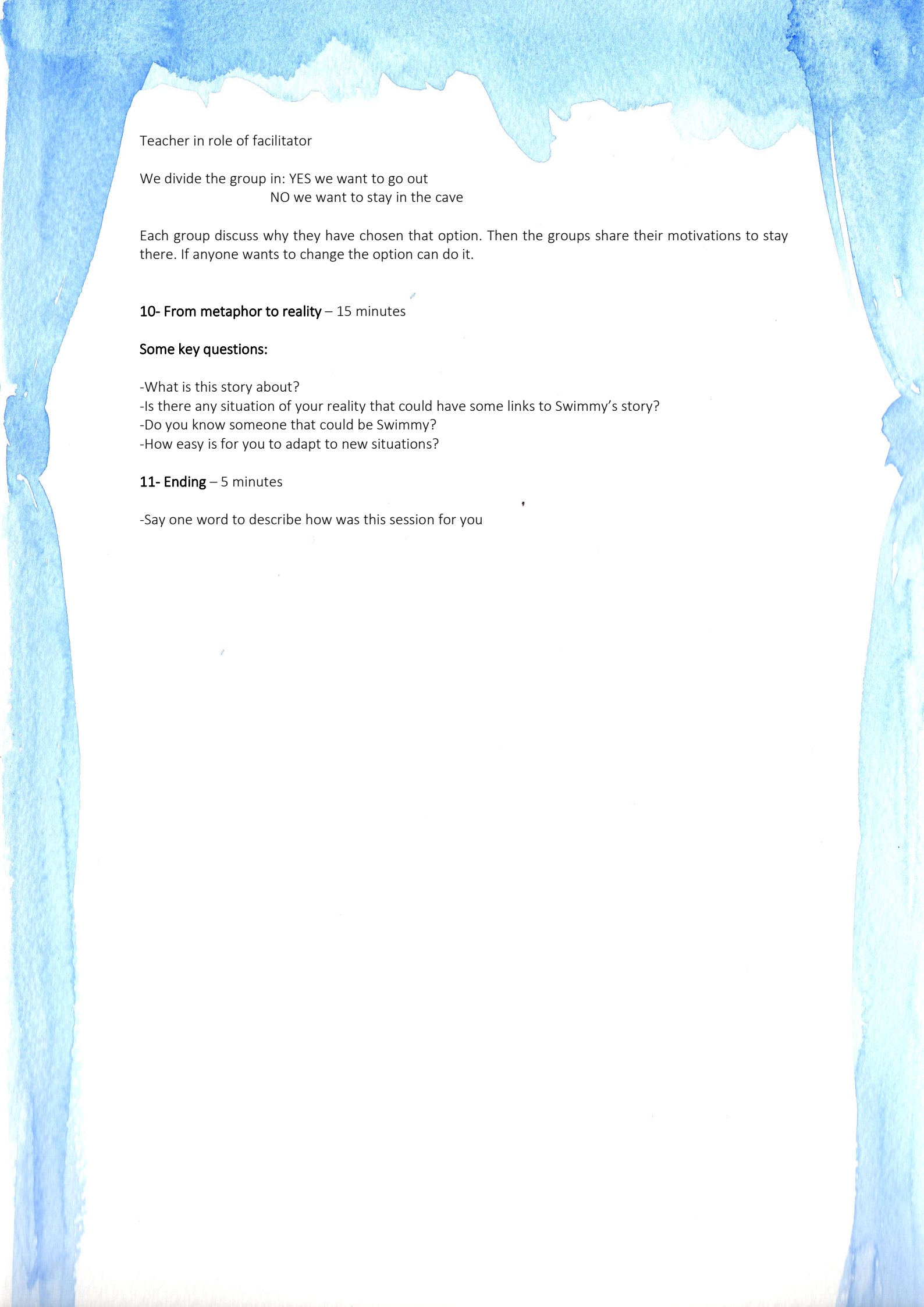
Swimmy tries to adapt himself to live with the other group of creatures. He tries to imitate them, do the same movements and sounds,... After trying he doesn't feel so good and decides to go for the second option, idea.

At this step we have two options:

- 1) Stop the action and make a Hot Seat with Swimmy: the Group can ask him how is he feeling, what's going on,... And also give some advice to face second option-idea. Option to do the tunnel of good advices and strengths for Swimmy.
- 2) Go directly to second Swimmy's idea: To look for other fishes like him that are far away. It's scary and long trip but is the only option if he wants to find out fishes like him.

#### **9- Swimmy finds new fishes – Teacher in role of Swimmy, the group in role of the new fishes -10 minutes**

*"Hello friends. What are you doing here in this dark cave? What's going on with you? Are you scared of somebody? Come on go out, we need to be together. It's much more better to be outside than the rest of your life in a cave! Ok it's up to you, but who are the wants that would like to go out?"*

A decorative border made of blue watercolor paint, with darker blue on the left and right sides and lighter blue at the top, framing the white central area.

Teacher in role of facilitator

We divide the group in: YES we want to go out  
NO we want to stay in the cave

Each group discuss why they have chosen that option. Then the groups share their motivations to stay there. If anyone wants to change the option can do it.

**10- From metaphor to reality – 15 minutes**

**Some key questions:**

- What is this story about?
- Is there any situation of your reality that could have some links to Swimmy's story?
- Do you know someone that could be Swimmy?
- How easy is for you to adapt to new situations?

**11- Ending – 5 minutes**

- Say one word to describe how was this session for you



## ACTIVITY OUTLINE: THEATRE POSTCARDS

*Joel Pla Garriga*

**AIM OF THE WORKSHOP:** To synthesize and analyse different topics through powerful human pictures.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** None, but students can use anything they might need for the scene.

**PARTICIPANTS:** From 4 to 7 participants per group is best.

**TIME NEEDED:** From 15 to 40 minutes to prepare and between 5 and 10 minutes of presentation per group. Around 10 minutes to talk about each presentation.

### DESCRIPTION:

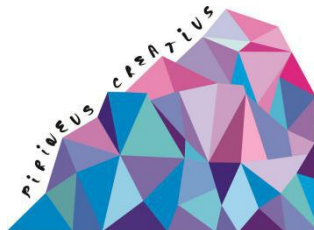
The facilitator ask to split the class in groups and give to each group a topic. This topic can be whatever the facilitator would like to experiment about (social issues, news, fairy tales, concepts, etc.) As an example we can give the topic *Immigration*. The students of this group will have to create a story about immigration and show it in five static images. To do so, the group can choose a "director of the play" who will decide the final point of the play and will intervene in case of a rift in the group. The director can also participate as an actor of the play. The students can experiment with their bodies and create objects, ideas, persons or animals.

When the group has finish the production of five static images, the facilitator will ask them to think about a title of the story they're about to show and also to create a sixth imagine which will be the poster. When all groups are finish with the process, they will show their story; showing first the poster and saying the title changing pictures every 5 seconds with a 3 seconds change.

### ROCOMMENDATIONS:

The facilitator needs to have an open point of view for all the topics proposed. It is also recommendable to encourage students to express their opinions about the topic their going to play more than just show the fact in images. The laxer the facilitator will be with he format of each picture the more new ideas can be discovered. After the presentation of each group it is very important, in order to have a reflection and a critical point of view of the topic to encourage students to share their opinions and feelings of what they have seen.

Questions that can be asked: *What are they talking about? How did the group show it? Do you agree with this point of view, and why?* The facilitator should try always to be in a neutral position in order to facilitate expression of thoughts and ideas from participants.



**TOPIC:** Personal presentation

*Monika Smiechowska*

**TYPE OF ACTIVITY:** Self expression, personal development and introducing

*Sarah Grillet*

**LEARNING GOALS:** self confidence, public speaking, actor's training

**DURATION:** 1 hour and a half/ 1h 45

**MATERIALS:** sheets of paper, pens



**SPACE REQUIREMENT:** if possible a stage, empty space (dancing room, for example)

**TARGET GROUP (AGE):** any

**SIZE OF THE GROUP:** around 10 participants.

**DESCRIPTION:**

- Ask the participants to find their own space in the room, with enough space between each of them, and to take a sheet of paper and a pen.
- Ask them to sit down comfortably, close their eyes, relax and meditate about 5 qualities they own beginning with the sentence : « I am... ».

ex : « I am nice. I am clever.... ». Propose them to write if they prefer/need to.

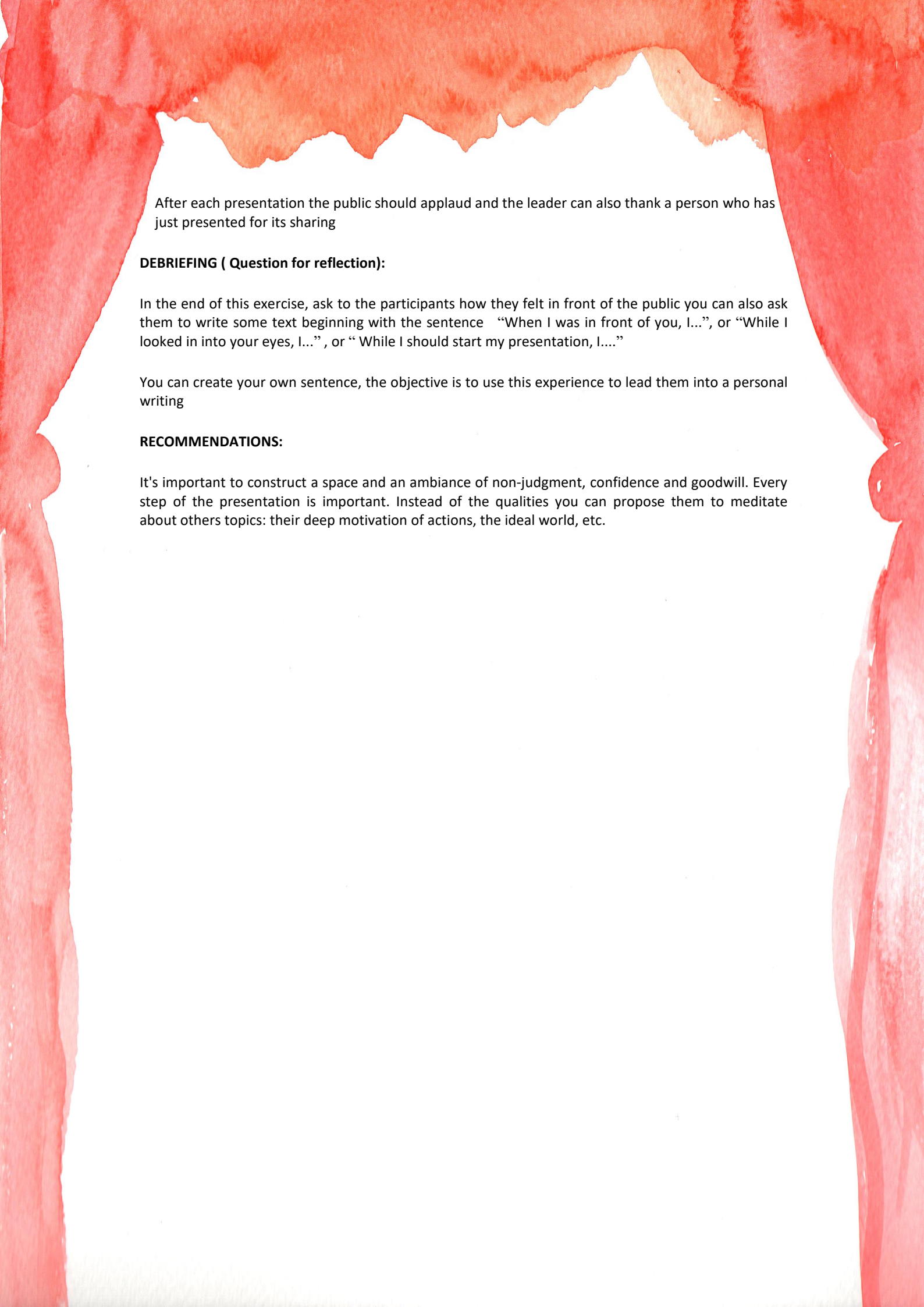
\*It is really important to precise to them that they should have non-judgment thoughts about them.

- Still within that meditative process (eyes are still closed), make them feel how those qualities « live » in their body which, little by little begins to move.
- When they are ready, invite them to slowly stand up (still with eyes closed) and give them 5 minutes to explore this in the space with eyes opened. They should find the movements or the gestures for each quality and create a personal 'choreography'.

Ask everybody to install themselves as a public in the one side of the room, and ask them to make one by one its personal presentation following your instructions :

- ✓ To go to the back of the room ( the other side of the room, the back of the stage)
- ✓ To stay a while with its back to the public,
- ✓ When they feel ready to turn and to look at the audience. They should take its time in order to feel their own fear, « how the view of the public disturbs » them. They should try to overtake it.
- ✓ When they feel ready, they should approach to the public, close enough to feel that it disturbs them again.
- ✓ To look into the eyes of each participant
- ✓ To tell something about themselves, something personal, that they want to share with the others, they have to also tell 5 qualities they own beginning with the sentence : « I am... ». They can also show their choreography.





After each presentation the public should applaud and the leader can also thank a person who has just presented for its sharing

**DEBRIEFING ( Question for reflection):**

In the end of this exercise, ask to the participants how they felt in front of the public you can also ask them to write some text beginning with the sentence “When I was in front of you, I...”, or “While I looked in into your eyes, I...” , or “ While I should start my presentation, I....”

You can create your own sentence, the objective is to use this experience to lead them into a personal writing

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It's important to construct a space and an ambiance of non-judgment, confidence and goodwill. Every step of the presentation is important. Instead of the qualities you can propose them to meditate about others topics: their deep motivation of actions, the ideal world, etc.



We hope this toolkit will be of use for anyone, who believes that Theatre CAN make a change.  
Thank you

Team