

6 Kids' Acting Games to Play With Your Budding Actor

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Whether you're the parent of a budding actor, or a drama enthusiast hoping to ignite a stage spark in your child, there are plenty of cool acting games you can play at home! Acting games are used in many top drama classes and workshops because they're really handy for developing key acting and performance skills in a fun way. Another cool thing about acting games is that they cost nothing but time and creativity yet yield educational and personal development as well as hours of precious family fun time!

Here's a list of our favorite acting games to play with young aspiring stars. Ideally, these games should be played in a group of three or more, but there are a few you can try in pairs if it's just you and your little actor. Break a leg!

Warming Up

1) Tongue Twisters

Getting warmed up is essential for any drama lesson and good performance. Many drama teachers introduce tongue-twisting acting games to kids of all ages to help them focus on articulation. A great way to start is by asking your kids to scrunch up their faces and make them as small as possible for a couple of seconds. Then, get them to stretch their expressions to make them as wide as they can go. After a quick nose wiggle, you're all set to twist those tongues! Here are a few tongue-twisting favorites to try:

- Unique New York. Unique New York.
- Can you can a can as a canner can can a can?
- Red lorry, yellow lorry. Red lorry, yellow lorry.

- She sells seashells on the seashore.
- Kitten in the kitchen.

Ideally you should start by saying the tongue twisters slowly together. Once the confidence is up you can ask your child to say it on their own. While doing so you should also encourage your little one to use their stage voice, not a normal voice – meaning, their voice should carry across the room. Depending on the age of your kids, you could take this up a level by assigning an emotion to each tongue twister; for example, you could try angry ones, happy ones, sad ones, and so on. Or even better, as a challenge, you can try to gradually increase the emotion per turn (this works well even if it's just two players).

Building Ensembles and Trust

2) One-Word Story

This is a great game to help with focus and teamwork. While facing each other or seated in a circle, the first player says a single word to begin the story. Progressing through the circle, the person on the left of Player One says the next word, and so on. The aim is to tell a comprehensive story through only one-word exchanges.

3) Walking Blind

As the name says, this game is all about walking blindly in pairs to build trust and encourage players to be more comfortable with each other. This game must be played in silence as the first player is asked to close their eyes. Player Two must then guide Player One around the room by only holding their hand or shoulder. This continues for about two minutes, with the couple wandering around in silence – then of course you can switch roles. The aim of the game is for the blind player to be more trusting, and the leading player to create a safe environment. At the end of this game it's great for all players to reflect and chat about how their partner made them feel safe, and how they made their partners feel safe.

Breaking Out

4) Exaggeration Circle

There are many acting games that are designed to help even the shyest of little actors break out of their shells within a few moments. One of our favorites is the Exaggeration Circle. In this game, players can stand in a circle or facing each other. The goal of the game is to gradually dramatize Player One's gesture. Player One can start small, such as with a little finger pointing. Then, Player Two can make it bolder, with Player Three even adding a shout to the pointing, and so on. Obviously, this can be rotated if you're playing it with a smaller group. The thing to remember is that all players must maintain the integrity of the initial gesture. We find this game to be a handy start to larger themes for character development later on.

Increasing Focus

5) Mirror

Actors need to be aware of their bodies and be able to convey a message through the slightest body movements. This game is a cool activity that can help with movements as well as general team building. You can play this one in pairs with players standing opposite each other. Player One begins by being the person looking into a pretend mirror, with Player Two acting as the reflection. During the game, Player One should move very slowly and Player Two must mirror every movement, including facial expressions. You can take this game up a notch after a while by nominating no leader or follower – just slow mirroring.

Exploring Creativity

6) On the Spot

Creative juices must have constant flow on stage! This fun acting game is fantastic for stretching the imagination and increasing spontaneity. To begin, create an imaginary stage and get players to step forward one at a time. Explain that one person will be in charge of picking a theme or topic, then the remaining players will need to perform something that fits in into that theme – it can be really simple, like a sound, or a pose, or a motion – anything that links to the theme. Try to encourage out-of-the-box interpretations of common themes.

We hope that you've found our list handy and we trust that it will give you hours of family fun while learning new skills