

Looking for some fun theatre activities for the family to enjoy at home?

Delaware Theatre Company's Department of Education & Community Engagement has some suggestions for you here!

Acting Games for All Ages

Charades

Try a classic game of charades together. Create clues individually by writing or drawing them on slips of paper and putting them in a bowl. Each actor draws a slip of paper and tries to act out the clue for the group to guess. Create teams, or work as one big group, working against the clock – or in whatever time frame you want! Here are options to tailor the game to your group:

Categories – Create clues that belong in a category, such as sports, musical instruments, “around the house,” places, or other categories of your choosing!

Picture charades – This is a great way to include non-readers in the group. Draw pictures for the clues instead of writing words. Younger children can figure out what the picture is and act it out. Another suggestion: Use a photo album or an illustrated book like a Richard Scarry book, and let your children choose something from one of these to act out for you to guess. (How much fun would it be to act out and guess “pickle car”? 😊)

Sound Up – If guessing is tricky, offer the option of “turning the sound up,” and let the guessers use an imaginary remote to unmute the action. Actors can then speak or make sounds to help communicate the clue.

Word-at-a-Time Storytelling

Sit in a circle facing one another, and begin making up a story that starts with the words “Once upon a time...” The trick is, however, that each person can only speak one word before it is the next person’s turn, so the first person can only say, “Once,” and then the next person speaks “upon,” and so on. Listen to one another as the story is created. If, after hearing the words, “there...was... a...tadpole,” the rest of the group should keep that tadpole story going rather than trying to commandeer the action in another direction. Can you tell a complete short story working together? Yes, you can – if you listen and direct your creativity!

Arms Expert

Two people perform as an “expert” while the rest of the group acts as an audience with questions. Create an unusual expertise to talk about—perhaps it is “Yeti Yodeling” or “Fish Baseball,” for example. One of the performers, who is the only performer who gets to speak, stands in front of the other with their arms behind their back. The second performer slides his or her own arms around the first—this second performer does all of the arm motions and hand gestures to accompany what the performer in front is saying. On the word “Action,” audience members raise their hands to ask the expert a question, such as “How did you teach a yeti to yodel?” The speaking expert responds with a dramatic answer, such as “First I climbed Mount Everest to search for the yeti. It was freezing cold, and suddenly, I came upon a ferocious yeti that I had to tame by playing my violin!” As the speaking expert speaks, the second performer’s arms illustrate all the action, moving as though climbing, hugging as though shivering, making claw-like fingers to show something ferocious, playing a violin, etc. Audience members’ questions can get very creative to help draw out the situation, and the two performers—one speaking, one gesturing from behind—should work together to help each other be as dramatic as possible, while still making it look like they are one expert telling of an amazing adventure or expertise. After several questions, let the group members take on new roles as audience, speaker, and arms.

Magic Prop

Choose a simple object such as a yardstick, basket, or even a paper plate. Take turns becoming an actor who transforms the object into something else imaginative—the yardstick could become, for instance, a golf club, and the actor gets to create the golf club and the world in which it is used. Don’t try to make it a fast guessing game—the purpose is not about guessing what the object is. Instead, this game is about letting the object develop magically into a prop used in a scene, and allowing each actor to use this object imaginatively and create not only the “what” in the scene, but the “who” as they become a character using the object, and the “where” of indicating the setting. Allow each actor time to reveal the world they create.

Freeze Dance

This is a great game for getting a little physical activity! Choose an upbeat, family-friendly song, and have the “DJ” start the music while everybody else dances. When the DJ stops the music, everyone must freeze. (Breathing and blinking are allowed!) Rather than making people be out of the game if they get caught moving, add a challenge, such as “You have to dance with your right hand on your right knee for the next round,” or “You have to dance like a chicken for the next round.” Take turns being DJ and dancers.

Theatre is for all ages and all abilities. Find creative ways to get everyone involved in the game!

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