

The Machine Game

Warm up. Sit in a circle. The teacher demonstrates movements for the group to copy. Make these movements jerky, robotic and machine-like. Use different levels and introduce swinging, reaching and bending movements that could form a link to the next person in the circle.

Whole group work. The teacher demonstrates three or four of the machine-like movements for the group to copy in sequence. Practise the sequence in pairs. Concentrate on making the movements machine-like. Add sound effects at this stage.

Whole group work. Back in the circle, practice the machine sequence again. This time add in the sound effects.

Whole group work. Now suggest a theme for the machine. For instance, if the machine made cookies what kind of actions would be required? If the machine made frogs, what kind of actions would be required? If the machine made rain, what kind of actions would be required? Once you have picked your theme, work on appropriate machine-like movements in the same way as before. Practise them as a whole group and then split into pairs to practice and add sound effects.

Two machines. Develop two different machines that make different things, frogs and cookies for example. The teacher then takes a role as the lazy and incompetent machine operator who mixes up the ingredients with disastrous results. Remember to control the drama whilst in role by turning the machine on and off, shaking in the 'wrong' ingredients, suggesting that the machine is going wrong and has finally broken down.

Whole group work. Practise machine-like movements as before. You can decide at this point if the idea of a themed machine is working well. If not, concentrate on the idea of making the movements jerky and linking them to movements of others. Ask individuals, one at a time, to come and make their movements in the centre of the circle. Each new person adapts their movement, with the help of the workers present, to link it to the previous one. Communicate the idea that in a working machine all the parts work well together.

Extension activity 1. Once the machine in the centre of the circle has been completed, repeat the building of the machine again. This time practise linking the movements to each other smoothly. Add sound effects. The teacher can 'conduct' the machine. It can go faster or slower or go wrong and breakdown.

Extension activity 2. Use these machine movement ideas to work on a piece of text or an appropriate story. Create a character – or mythic creature – from the text as a machine. This works well with Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky* for instance.

Extension activity 3. Ask groups to come up with their own machine based on a theme suggested by you. For instance, dragon, peace, war, night time.

Find more resources at: www.louisetondeur.co.uk/resources-for-teachers/