

Lesson 2: Make Associations

"The strange thing is the brain connects things. Cat, bird, nest, tree, grass, house, sun, smoke. That's what the brain does. It doesn't go sausage, Mrs. Thatcher." -Keith Johnstone, creator of Theatersports

TEACHER OVERVIEW: Making associations through words or actions helps improvisors create something based on a suggestion. For those students who think "I can't think of anything to say," these activities help open the gates of creativity.

Association: (noun) a mental connection between ideas or things

OBJECTIVE: Students will practice making associations and discover tools to help them think quickly and creatively.

MATERIALS:

- Homework handout for each student (**Appendix B-1**)

GREETING:

- Gather students in a standing circle.
- If homework was assigned, ask a few students to share their journal entries and reflect on the assigned videos. Lead into...
 - *Those improvisors have been working together for years. They trust each other and work seamlessly as a team.*
 - *As you probably noticed, they also came up with ideas very quickly. I'm sure some of you thought, "I can't do that. I couldn't think of anything to say!"*
 - *They created those scenes based on associations they made in their heads.*
 - *What were some associations you saw made in those videos?*
- *An association is a connection or a link between two things.*
- *Associations give us something to work with, that we can then build upon.*
- *Today we are going to practice creating words and actions based on associations.*

WARM UP: Duck, Duck, Cereal!

- *For our first activity, we're going to play a variation of Duck, Duck, Goose!*
- Remain in a standing circle. Explain the rules:
- This game is played like Duck Duck Goose, but instead of Goose, "It" tags a student and assigns them a category. Then "It" runs around the circle and tries to get back to the person they tagged before that student can name three things from the assigned category.
- *Example: "Duck, duck, duck, cereal!" "It" runs around the circle, while the tagged student says, "Cheerios, Frosted Flakes, Kix."*
- If the student is able to say three things before "It" gets back to them, "It" continues walking around the circle and starts the round again. If the student from the circle does not come up with three things before "It" gets to them, they are now "It."
- **Game Debrief:** *How was it trying to come up with three things under pressure? We all have the capacity to quickly generate ideas, but it is something that comes easier with practice.*