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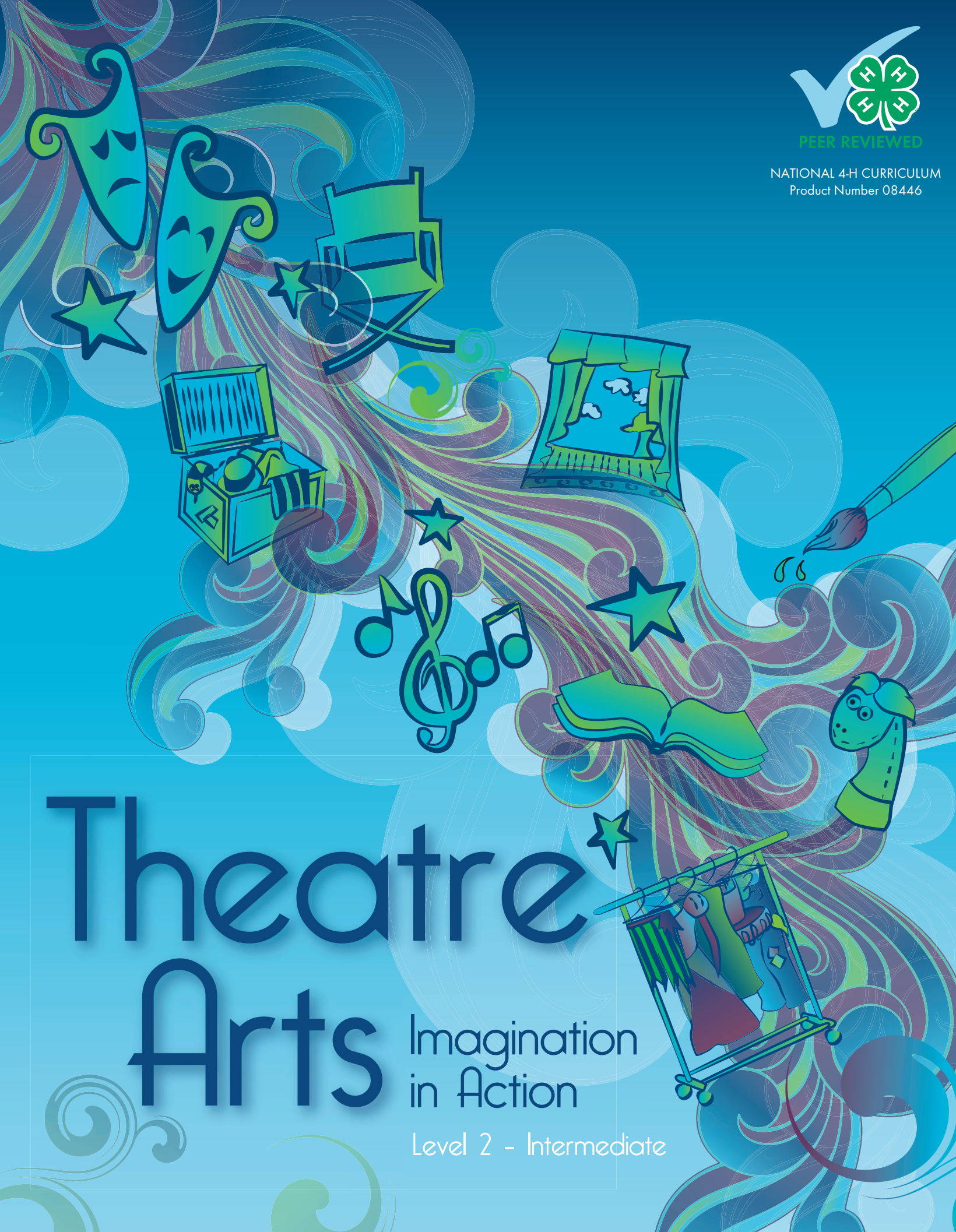
NATIONAL 4-H CURRICULUM

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Theatre Arts

Imagination
in Action

Level 2 - Intermediate





Acknowledgments

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THEATRE ARTS CURRICULUM

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Pantomime – Stories with a Beginning, Middle and End

How Can We Communicate Our Message Without Using Words?

Skill Level

Intermediate

Learner Outcome

Communicate using body movement to create a simple story through pantomime.

Educational Standard(s)

National Theatre Standards 5-8. Standard 2.

Success Indicator

Communicates a simple story with a beginning, middle and end through pantomime.

Life Skill(s)

- Communication
- Self- Discipline
- Decision Making

Tags

Creative Movement, Body Language, Non-Verbal Communication

Time Needed

45 minutes

Materials List

One drum (for facilitator). Note: Any kind of percussion instrument will work.

Introduction

Imagine that you have an important story to tell someone but music is blaring so loud that you can't be heard. How would you communicate? Why not through pantomime?! It is ingenious and creative to use body movement and facial expressions to tell your story. You don't need to be a pantomime actor to be a skilled pantomime artist yourself!



Opening Questions

When have you seen people pantomiming because they couldn't express themselves verbally? How can we make our stories clear to others without using words?

Experience/“What to Do”

Each of you will create your own pantomime story with a beginning, middle and end out of three separate movements. All of your communication will be without words.

Let's start with a physical warm up that will lead into your pantomime story. You'll be walking freely throughout the room on your own; when you hear a drum beat, freeze in position. Vary your positions with each drum beat, broadening your range from high to low and left to right. Let's begin!

Learn More

You can find additional information on this activity and more at:

www.4-H.org/curriculum/theatre2



Now let's move into your pantomime story in which you connect three movements to create a story. I will hit the drum three times in succession, and with each drum beat you will make a new movement. Then using your imagination, you will connect those movements into a story.

For instance, let's say your first position was kneeling on one knee, your next position your right leg outstretched and your final movement, your two arms extended straight forward, palms up). What pantomime story could you create from these movements? You could be a skater who fell on the ice and twisted an ankle (kneeling position), who needs to leave the rink for a few months to do physical therapy (right leg extended) and who triumphs by skating with the team at the ice show at the end of the season (arms outstretched to the audience following skating)!

Facilitator Note:

Feel free to model each of the movements as you say them aloud. Encourage youth to try the movements along with you.

When you perform your pantomime story, you will be extending beyond the three movements. For instance, the skater can rub her ankle to indicate pain, do a series of physical movements simulating physical therapy, and do a skating routine.

Practice your pantomime story on your own, then share it with a partner. Ask your partner to tell you what story he or she sees; remember, no verbal communication. Now reverse, and you give feedback on your partner's pantomime story. If you each see a different story than that intended by your partner, not to worry. This just shows that each of us is unique in how we see the world! Telling a story without being able to speak is a challenge, but a fun one. Who knew how much could be said without words!

Did you know?

The pantomime artist develops spatial awareness and understanding of physical expression. Pantomime demonstrates an important skill needed in acting: the ability to concentrate. Concentration is the ability to focus and maintain attention upon an object, image, idea, action or experience while excluding distracting factors.

Pantomime conveys emotion through non-verbal communication. Charlie Chaplain, a famous actor in the silent film era, was a master in the art of pantomime, creating empathy for his character through poignant movement and facial expressions.

News & Careers

Actors who are pantomime artists rely on facial expression, body language and gestures to convey emotion. They prepare their bodies for the physicality of performing pantomime. Exercise such as yoga and dance develop flexibility and body control. Relaxation techniques help the actor achieve mental alertness and composure.

Find more information at:
www.4-H.org/curriculum/theatre2



Share...

What happened as you began to transform your movement into a pantomime story?

Reflect...

What did you have to do to communicate your story without words?

Generalize...

At what times is it important to be able to express yourself non-verbally?

Term Concept Discovery/Facilitator Notes

Because pantomime does not involve any verbalization, it is common for the facilitator to make the false assumption that pantomime is the simplest form of creative dramatics, and choose this as a first activity. One of the most common blunders made by creative dramatics leaders is to ask a child to pantomime an activity for an audience to try to identify. This can result in awkwardness and discomfort on the part of the participants. Pantomime is one of the most complex forms of drama; it requires great skill and physical coordination to communicate an idea without the assistance of speech.

Depending on the size of the group as well as their interest in the activity, you can extend the sharing to include the entire group, rather than only to one's partner. You could also invite the group to add narration to others' pantomimes.

Since this activity involves physical movement, it is important to be sensitive to the different physical capacities of the children. In your sidecoaching, remind the children that they should only move at a level at which they are each comfortable. Adaptations can be made to any physical limitations; for instance, children in wheelchairs can do movements which involve upper body movement.

Apply...

What can you do to make yourself understood when you can't use words?



Communicating Emotions – It's All In the Tone

How Does Your Tone of Voice Change the Meaning of Your Words?

Skill Level

Intermediate

Learner Outcomes

Use variations in tone of voice to impact listener perception of verbal expression.

Educational Standard(s)

National Theatre Standards 5-8:
Standard 2.
National Language Arts Standards:
Standard 8.

Success Indicator

Listener feedback verifies that tone of voice impacts listener perception of verbal expression.

Life Skill(s)

- Communication
- Empathy

Tags

Voice, Speech, Dialogue, Acting

Time Needed

45 minutes

Materials List

None

Introduction

It is not just what you say, but how you say it that determines how others react to your words. This is described as your tone of voice, the emotion and attitude in your voice. Let's practice using different tones of voice and discover how these different ones change how our messages are perceived by the listener.

Opening Questions

Recall a time when you said something that someone misunderstood, or when you misunderstood someone else's meaning. How did tone of voice result in this misunderstanding? For instance, was a soft tone interpreted as fear when it was actually shyness? Or a dull tone perceived as disinterest when it was sheer exhaustion? How can you be more aware of the tone of voice you use, so that the listener perceives the message you intend?



Learn More

You can find additional information on this activity and more at:

www.4-H.org/curriculum/theatre2



Experience/“What to Do”

Tone of voice is very important in communication. The tone of voice you use in speaking will determine how others respond to your words. In this activity, you and a partner will learn how changing tone of voice changes the meanings of your words and how they are understood.

In this activity, you and your partner will repeat the same two lines to each other, but each time changing your tones of voice.

Person A: *Hello.*

Person B: *Where have you been?*

Repeat these two line dialogues four times, each time changing your tone of voice in how you deliver your line. (Examples: happy, sad, worried, angry, fearful, surprised, confused, impatient).

After each dialogue, ask your partner what tone he or she heard in your voice. If the tone your partner heard was not what you intended, repeat the dialogue, focusing on projecting the tone you intended. Ask your partner how your tone of voice made him or her feel and determine if that response was your intent.

Explore with your partner what types of relationships might exist between your two characters based on your tones of voice. For instance a nervous “Hello” and an angry “Where have you been?” could be a late employee and disapproving employer. A weary “Hello” and shocked “Where have you been?” could be a bleeding child and responsive guardian. After trying out the different character relationships based on tones of voice, select a dialogue to develop into a scene.

In acting, as well as everyday communication, It’s All in the Tone!

References

Drama Book Shop, 250 West 40th St, NY, NY www.dramabookshop.com

Did you know?

When actors audition, you will often hear them trying on different tones of voice as they read their parts. This process helps them to “find the personality of the character”. In what is known as a “cold reading”, actors are handed a script and asked to play characters, without opportunity for prior preparation.

Playwrights often write tone of voice directions into the script to assure that the actor projects the emotion that the playwright intended. For example, in the line: Gloria (spoken sternly, but calmly) “It’s time to go now”, the character of Gloria is directed to deliver the line in a serious, controlled manner. In playwriting, this is described as “adding line readings to the stage directions”.

News & Careers

Careers in communication include corporate training, teaching, and commercial film, radio and television. Communication studies include importance of developing voice tone that projects intended meaning.



Share...

What was the most challenging part of communicating with different tones of voice?

Reflect...

What tones of voice did you and your partner find more natural to each of you? What tones of voice were most unlike each of you? What did you learn about yourself and your partner?

Generalize...

Describe a time when you may have misinterpreted someone's tone of voice. For example, you may have heard a tone as cold and unfriendly, rather than abrupt and worried. Describe a time when someone may have misinterpreted your tone of voice.

You will now notice many things about the learner and learning experience, e.g. degree of understanding, conceptions/misconceptions of content knowledge, and understanding/misunderstanding of vocabulary. Concepts or specific content that need to be re-emphasized, re-taught or reframed should emerge at this stage.

Term Concept Discovery/Facilitator Notes...

If youth choose to explore a variety of tones of voice, encourage them to do so, beyond the four they have practiced. The purpose of this activity is to have youth experience the impact of tone of voice on intended meaning. The transition into scene development need not happen in one session. Depending on the time available, the scene development could be continued into follow up sessions. Youth can choose to improvise their scenes, or write them, adding the line readings into their script's stage directions.

Apply...

In the future, how will you apply what you learned in this activity to your communication with others?



Role Reversal – Listening With New Ears

How Does Reversing Roles Through Role-play Help Develop Awareness of Others and Their Perspectives?

Skill Level

Intermediate

Learner Outcomes

By listening to your partner's words and interpreting their intent, reverse roles and assume the partner's character.

Educational Standard(s)

National Theatre Standards 5-8:

Standard 2.

National Language Arts Standards:

Standard 8.

Success Indicator

Accurately assumes character role of partner following observation of the partner's actions and speech.

Life Skill(s)

- Empathy
- Communication
- Cooperation
- Conflict Resolution
- Accepting Differences
- Managing Relationships

Tags

Active Listening

Time Needed

45 minutes

Materials List

Handout: Conflict Pair Trigger Lines

Introduction

When we have a disagreement with someone, it is usually because we don't understand "where the other person is coming from". We don't see the situation from the other person's point of view because we are only viewing the situation from our own perspective. If someone has ever said to you "Try taking a walk in my shoes", he or she is asking you to be more sensitive to his or her own life experience and opinions.



Opening Questions

When have you stopped in the middle of an argument to try to understand someone else's point of view? When have you felt that a disagreement wouldn't have escalated if the other person could only have reversed roles and "stood in your shoes?" How can we become more self-aware of our own bias and more empathetic towards others?

Experience/"What to Do"

In this activity, you will role-play a conflict between two characters. You will then switch roles, taking on the persona of the other character. Be observant of your partner's words and actions, as you will be assuming those same verbal and non-verbal behaviors when you reverse roles.

Learn More

You can find additional information on this activity and more at:

www.4-H.org/curriculum/theatre2



With a partner, form pairs for role-playing and each look at the Conflict Pair Trigger Lines sheet. Select one of these trigger lines to role play:

Person 1 *I won't.*
Person 2 *Why not?*

Person 1 *I can't.*
Person 2 *You must.*

Person 1 *This is wrong.*
Person 2 *No, it isn't.*

Keep repeating the two lines back and forth until you define a character relationship (e.g., brother and sister, mother and child) and the conflict between you. (e.g., resisting authority, negative peer pressure).

Let's look at the following example:

Person 1 *I can't.*
Person 2 *You must.*
Person 1 *I have to go, Maria.*
Person 2 *Come on, Ana, come study with me.*
Person 1 *No, Maria, I am going to see my brother in his show.*
Person 2 *Hey Ana, if I don't know the answers in school tomorrow, I'm going to summer school.*
Person 1 *Maria, I can't let my brother down. I have to go now.*
Person 2 *So you're going to let me down then?*

The conflict that developed out of the trigger lines "I can't"/"You must" was a disagreement between two friends.

When the roles are reversed, Ana will become Maria and Maria will become Ana. Each will assume the verbal and non-verbal communication style of the other. They will have the option of resolving the conflict in the end, or leaving the resolution open ended. In discussion after the scene, both actors will be asked if reversing roles had helped them see the other character's perspective.

Now let's begin your conflict pair role play.

Now reverse roles.

Let's come out of roles to share what it was like to Listen With New Ears! Through reversing roles, you heard in a new way, with words from the heart!

Did you know?

Role reversal is not only a dynamic approach to character development in actor training. It is also a widely used technique in drama therapy. The role reversal process is therapeutic, for it frees up emotions which had been previously buried. This emotional release is defined as a catharsis. Role reversal results in catharsis, a positive emotional release experiences. Role reversal also develops personal insights and produces positive behavior change.

"Drama therapy is the intentional use of drama and/or theatre processes to achieve therapeutic goals."

Find more information at:

www.4-H.org/curriculum/theatre2

News & Careers

In the field of mental health, there is a distinction between the practices of psychiatry, psychology and psychotherapy. Psychiatrists are medical doctors and are thus able to prescribe medication. They focus mainly on the biological foundation of behavior. Psychologists focus on the social or environmental factors, such as family structure/dynamics, and societal influences; they generally work on research and client assessment. Psychotherapists are clinical practitioners trained to work with individuals, families, and groups. Their job titles relate to the settings in which they work and the populations they serve (e.g., mental health professional, marriage and family therapist, clinical social worker).

Find more information at:

www.4-H.org/curriculum/theatre2



Share...

What was the hardest part of this activity? The easiest part?

Reflect...

What did it feel like to reverse roles during your conflict?

Generalize...

In reversing roles, what skills did you use?

Apply...

Name times when the ability to reverse roles will help you in your interpersonal communication.

Term Concept Discovery/Facilitator Notes...

The term “interpersonal communication” embraces many forms of communication between and among individuals and groups. Youth can be asked to identify these many forms (e.g., one on one conversation, small group discussion, etc.).

Understanding the meaning and evidence of bias, both personal and societal, is important to the impact of this activity. The life skill of empathy is also central to the role reversal activity; youth can be encouraged to explore examples of “being empathetic.”

Provide partners the option to develop their own role reversal scenes rather than use the Conflict Pair Trigger Lines handout. It is very likely that the group, through brainstorming, warm ups, and improvisations, will have identified their own conflict scenarios without the need for the sheets; these trigger lines are offered only as a framework for those who prefer to begin within a structure.

This Role Reversal – Listening With New Ears activity links well with the Dialogue – Resolving Conflict (Advanced Level Theatre Arts curriculum activity) in its application to peer mediation, peer education and conflict resolution programming. (If you have access to the Advance Level activities, you may want to reference the Facilitator Notes in the activity titled Dialogue – Resolving Conflict).



Conflict Pair Trigger Lines

With a partner, select one of these trigger lines, record your scenario and create a role-play.

- A** **Person 1** *I won't.*
 Person 2 *Why not?*
- B** **Person 1** *I can't.*
 Person 2 *You must.*
- C** **Person 1** *This is wrong.*
 Person 2 *No, it isn't.*

Repeat the two lines back and forth until you define a character relationship (e.g., brother and sister, mother and child) and the conflict between you. (e.g., resisting authority, negative peer pressure).

	Characters	Conflict
A		
B		
C		

Example:

- Person 1** *I can't.*
Person 2 *You must.*
Person 1 *I have to go, Maria.*
Person 2 *Come on, Ana, come study with me.*
Person 1 *No, Maria, I am going to see my brother in his show.*
Person 2 *Hey Ana, if I don't know the answers in school tomorrow, I'm going to summer school.*
Person 1 *Maria, I can't let my brother down. I have to go now.*
Person 2 *So you're going to let me down then?*