

Activity Template 3 → Soft Skills

Empowering Soft Skills through Drama and Improvisation.

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Activity objectives:

- To enhance emotional intelligence and interpersonal empathy.
- To overcome language barriers through non-verbal communication and body language.
- To build self-confidence and public speaking abilities in a supportive environment.
- To strengthen team bonding and trust within international groups.

General framework: This activity is linked with *Soft Skills* development, focusing on "Learning to Learn" and social competences through creative expression.

Cross-curricular subjects involved:

- **Drama/Performing Arts:** Techniques for improvisation and role-playing.
- **English as a Second Language:** Practical use of the language in spontaneous, real-life scenarios.
- **Psychology/Social Studies:** Understanding group dynamics and emotional responses.

Material needed to develop the activity:

- An open space (Aula Magna of the school) free of desks and chairs.
- Simple props (hats, scarves, or everyday objects) to stimulate imagination.
- Music player for atmospheric background or rhythm-based exercises.

Timing: Approx. 2 hours.

Groups: Large group for initial warm-up, followed by small mixed international teams (Italian, Finnish, and Belgian students).

Procedure to develop the activity:

1. **Warm-up (20 mins):** Physical and vocal exercises to "break the ice" and reduce performance anxiety.
2. **Improvisation Games (40 mins):** Short, fast-paced games focusing on "Yes, and..." logic, where students must build upon each other's ideas without preparation.
3. **Role-Play Scenarios (40 mins):** Small groups act out everyday or surreal situations, using a mix of English and physical theater to convey meaning.
4. **Debriefing (20 mins):** A final circle where students share how they felt and what they learned about communicating with peers from different cultures.

Competences and skills to be acquired:

- **Personal, social and learning to learn competence:** Managing emotions and working collaboratively.
- **Communication competence:** Expressing ideas and feelings effectively, even with limited vocabulary.
- **Cultural awareness:** Understanding different styles of expression and social cues.
- **Problem-solving:** Adapting quickly to unexpected changes during a performance.

Pitfalls and strengths:

- **Strengths:** Effectively "broke the ice" early in the week; created a safe space for students to make mistakes; high levels of laughter and genuine connection.
- **Pitfalls:** Initial shyness from some students; the challenge of explaining complex drama rules in a second language (simplified through physical demonstration).

Pictures:

