

WHEN VEGETABLES ATTACK/ GULP/ MATES/ HEROES – Teachers' Notes

Dennis Clare and Tony Williams have been performing individually and together for the past sixteen years. **MATES** and **GULP** are the latest in their programmes for schools, with **MIMEORAMA** and **HEROES** having toured successfully for the past two years. Their collaborative works *Water Closet Productions* have been performed in pubs, theatres, festivals and concert venues throughout Australia. Dennis has worked extensively overseas, returning to Australia for World Expo in 1988. He can be seen regularly performing at the Art Gallery of NSW. Tony Williams has fifteen years of songwriting and singing experience and has two albums available and he has had chart success in South Africa.

MIME: ACTIVITIES & IMPROVISATIONS

DRINKING

1. Hold empty soft drink can in hand, fingers together. Slide can from hand maintaining shape of can. Place thumb under bottom lip and tilt the head back pretending to drink.

EATING APPLE

2. Using the same shape as drinking. Imagine you have an apple in your hand. Bring the apple up to your mouth biting between middle finger and thumb. As you bite turn your hand away from mouth. Place your tongue in your cheek and gently chew.

3. Combine drinking and eating by having a drink in one hand and food in the other. Take a bite and then drink, then another bite followed by another drink. Then create and perform a story with eating and drinking in it using mime.

4. Using the same hand shape as the apple imagine you are holding a small ball. Grab a partner and throw the ball to each other. Practice throwing and catching the ball.

5. With a partner mime out the story of William Tell, using the bow and arrow. Students can make up their own ending, but make sure it's in silence!

6. Choose a partner and face each other. Pretend you are looking in a mirror and follow the actions of the other person. Clean teeth, comb your hair, put on a jumper etc. Take turns being the 'leader'. Make up a story and present it to the class.

7. With your partner hit a balloon to each other. Take notice of the movement of the balloon then take the ball away and continue to play, hitting the balloon to each other moving in the same way.

8. Mime playing a game of tennis without a racquet or ball, play the game in slow motion.

9. Walk around the classroom imagining you are walking through honey. Feel it slow down until you cannot move. Then change to walking on sand or swimming through water or floating in space and add other things to react to, including each other.

10. Have a group of students creating sound effects while others make up a story and mime to sound effects.

11. Tell your partner the story of how you received a scar on your body (if you don't have one make one up). Your partner then acts and mimes out your story to the class while *you* are telling it.

MOVEMENT & DRAMA EXERCISES [a large space is required]

The following exercises will help develop a movement base. It may take time to settle students into the rhythm of the exercises. Try to get them to remain silent in some of the activities, music will help with some of the exercises.

1. Standing, walking, running - these are the three choices you have in moving through the space. Let everyone explore these choices. Get them to notice the movement of others. They may choose to move with others or at different times. Encourage them to discover connections during the exercise.

2. Walking through the space choosing your own direction to walk in...change direction...(repeat a few times) walk carefully backwards...change direction...walk forward...change direction...walk close to others without

3. Scribble with your body as you scribble lead with your elbow...then your left hip...then your right knee...then your nose...continue this using other parts of the body.
4. Place a ball at one end of a large space two metres from a wall. From one end of the room walk with eyes closed. Where you think the ball is bend down and place your hand. Teacher to tell student to stop if they come close to the wall. Notice their reactions to the space.
5. Find your pulse (heart beat). Walk at the same rate as your pulse. Find someone walking at the same pace as you. Walk with them.

ADVERB EXERCISE

This activity is a fun way to get the body moving while dialogue is happening.

Set up a chair and desk with a piece of paper on the desk.

There are eight steps to this exercise:

1. ENTER [enter from a door about ten paces from desk and chair]
2. CROSS [walk across space to chair]
3. SIT [sit down]
4. PICK UP [pick up paper]
5. PUT DOWN [put down paper]
6. STAND [stand up]
7. CROSS [walk back across space]
8. EXIT [exit through door]

Walk the students through the exercise so they know the pattern. When pattern is established give them an adverb on each step. Eg:

1. ENTER [LOUDLY]
2. CROSS [SADLY]
3. SIT [HAPPILY]

And so on until all eight steps are done. You may need to take students through this a few times until they remember the right adverbs.

The last step is to get students to recite a piece of poetry, sing a song or recite a monologue as they go through the steps.

CROSS BRAIN EXERCISE

SLAP...CLAP...GRAB

Sit on a chair and slap your hands on your knees, then clap your hands together. With your left hand grab your nose whilst simultaneously your right hand grabs your left ear. Repeat...slap clap grab...slap clap grab...slap clap grab...slap clap grab...slap clap grab. Once the pattern is set change...slap your knees, clap your hands. This time grab your nose with your right hand and your ear with your left hand...slap clap grab...slap clap grab...slap clap grab...slap clap grab...Once this pattern is set change to original and so on...slap clap grab.

KINESIC EXERCISE

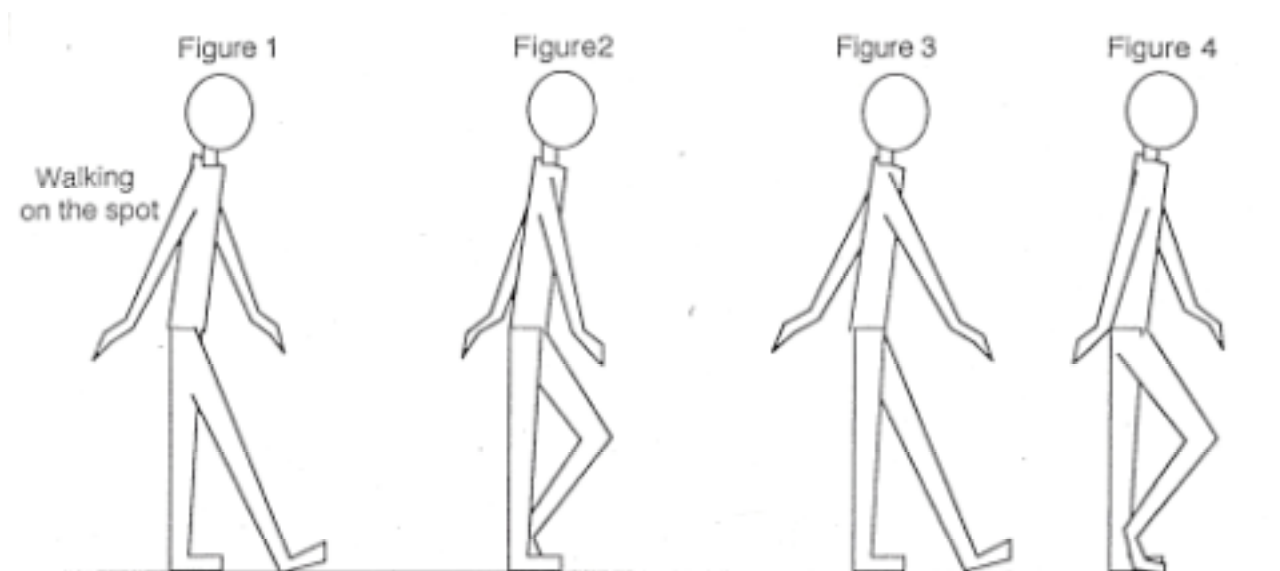
This exercise uses the kinesic sense (the imaginary muscle sensing of the body). This is the sense that takes over when we are watching a film or other things so if it is exciting or emotional or scary our bodies react. This exercise will not reproduce those feelings but will display how the kinesic sense operates and how it is as strong as the body.

1. Imagine you have a stick in your right hand. Stand facing the front, feet shoulder width apart. Pick up right foot and take a pace with your foot to the right at the same time thrusting the imaginary stick in your hand to your right as if you are sword fighting. Repeat this exercise several times to the right then do the same to the left.
2. Then stand still and go through the exercise just using your imagination. First to the right then to the left. Try to imagine the muscles you are using during the exercise. Try to match the same pace of the physical body.
3. Then go through the exercise to the right physically then stand still and go through it in your imagination. Repeat this on the left.
4. This time as you go through the exercise physically to the right, go through the exercise in your imagination on your left. Then move to the left physically and to the right with your imagination. Observe the feeling and discuss with the class their response to the exercise.

WALKING ON THE SPOT

Figure 1. Take a natural step with your right leg. Place it on the floor but do not put any weight on it. Your weight is on left leg. **Figure 2.** Slowly drag your right foot softly along the floor keeping it straight. At the same time left leg moves into a position where the knee is bent transferring your weight on to your right leg. **Figure 3.** Left leg is now ready to be straightened out and left foot is on the floor. The left foot is dragged softly back along the floor and at the same time right leg moves into bent position. **Figure 4.** Transferring your weight back on to your left leg.

Now repeat exercise trying to move in a fluid motion. Do not allow the body to move up and down with the bending of the leg or the transferring of the weight. Try not to swing the arms too high and above all move slowly. Do not drag the feet back too quickly and make sure the left and right legs are moving at the same time. As one is dragged back and the other moves into a bent position you will be putting stress on to your knee and ankle joints, so be careful.



LEANING AGAINST A WALL

Figure 1. Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. **Figure 2.** Push your right shoulder up toward your ear keeping your head straight. At the same time lean slightly to your right. **Figure 3.** Bring right leg into bent position with the heel of your foot off the floor, knee bent and turned inward, weight evenly spread onto both feet. Now waggle right knee. This movement has to be very small which gives the illusion that there is no weight on the right leg. A good exercise for this is to lean up against a wall in much the same position as in exercise then hold the position and just move slightly away from wall so you are not touching it. These three steps have to be performed as one, and smoothly, to make it look natural.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Young Australia Workshop

Address PO Box 7824 Bondi Beach, NSW, 2026 **Phone** 02 9332 1911 **Toll Free** 1800 227 095
Facsimile 02 9332 1922 **Email** gleitch@ozemail.com.au **Website** www.youngaus.com.au **ABN** 89 074 032 518
GLEN LEITCH MANAGEMENT PTY LTD