

Theatre Video Series

“Mime Over Matter”

Teacher's Guide

F974



"Mime Over Matter"

TEACHER'S GUIDE

"Mime Over Matter" is a student participation video that teaches the basics of mime. The video consists of demonstrations that can be easily followed by one student or a full class. This video can be stopped at the end of each section for review, to engage in additional exercises, or to end a class period. A quiz, selective bibliography and additional exercises have been included in the teacher's guide and we encourage you to make copies for your students.

The following is an outline of the entire video and has been broken down in sections from one to ten minutes in length.

OUTLINE

I. Purpose

- A. Introduction to the art of mime
- B. The fundamental techniques of mime
- C. The basic illusions of mime
- D. The basics of creating a mime piece

II. Working Definition

- A. Mime is the art of communicating through action.
- B. Mime is an international language.

III. Warm-ups

- A. Warm-ups are crucial to prepare the body.
- B. Warm-ups prevent strain.
- C. Warm-ups covered: neutral position, head, arm, waist, knees, feet and hands.

IV. The Five Sections of the Body

- A. When learning mime, divide the body into five sections.
- B. The sections are: head, neck, chest, waist and pelvis.
- C. The five sections are used to most effectively create illusions and messages.

V. Facial Exercise

- A. Exaggerate all of your gestures as a mime.
- B. Learn to exaggerate by starting with the head and face.
- C. Exaggerated faces that are demonstrated include: happy, sad, fiendish, snobbish, smelling, and the multiple face which includes "in love," sickness, and the sneeze.
- D. An explanation of the "slow motion" exercise

VI. The Diaphragm

- A. Using the diaphragm as a foundation for mime
- B. Using the diaphragm is good for singers, actors, dancers, etc...
- C. Using the diaphragm vs. the chest and shoulders
- D. The diaphragm as a balloon
- E. The purposes for using the diaphragm

VII. Introduction to the Technique of Mime

- A. To be an effective mime you need to learn the fundamentals.
- B. The basic movements of a mime
 - 1. Inclinations
 - 2. Rotations
 - 3. Transtations

VIII. The Inclinations

- A. Forward inclinations
- B. Rear inclinations
- C. Side inclinations

IX. The Rotations

- A. Warm-ups
- B. Examples
- C. Participation

X. The Transtations

- A. Forward and backward transtations
- B. Side transtations

XI. Exaggerated Action

- A. Exaggerated actions show how the mime feels.
- B. Importance of using face and body together
- C. Break down movements
- D. Showing surprise
- E. The mirror exercise

XII. Stage Takes

- A. Definition
- B. Example
- C. The purpose of takes
- D. Types of "takes" including: single takes, double takes, and triple takes

XIII. The Stage Trip

- A. Definition
- B. Example
- C. Participation

XIV. Introduction to Illusions

- A. Explanation of why exercises are crucial
- B. Definition

XV. Practicing with Real Objects

- A. Example with the glass
- B. Magnify each action
- C. Complete each gesture
- D. Examples
- E. Participation
- F. Explanation of ball exercise

XVI. Becoming an Object

- A. Act as if you are the object.
- B. Examples include: the feather, a lead ball, a ping pong ball, scissors, a phone and bacon
- C. Explanation of the machine exercise
- D. "Bubbles"

XVII. The Lean

- A. Example
- B. Explanation
- C. Participation

XVIII. The Sit

- A. Example
- B. Warm-ups
- C. Explanation
- D. Participation

XIX. The Wall

- A. Example
- B. Key words: Relax/Flat
- C. Explanation
- D. Participation

XX. Walk #1

- A. Example
- B. Warm-ups
- C. Key words: Kick/Switch
- D. Explanation
- E. Participation

XXI. Walk #2

- A. Example
- B. Warm-ups
- C. Key words: Step/Push
- D. Explanation
- E. Participation
- F. Variations

XXII. Hand Exercises

- A. Example
- B. Explanation
- C. Purpose
- D. Participation

XXIII. The Rope

- A. Example
- B. Key words: Grab/Grab/Pull
- C. Explanation
- D. Participation
- E. Variations

XXIV. Creating a Mime Sketch

- A. Who is your audience?
- B. What is your purpose?
- C. Brainstorm
 - 1. Using illusions
 - 2. Sketch of illusions
 - 3. Acting out a story
 - 4. Using a theme
 - 5. "Love"
 - 6. Explanation of the heart
- D. Using the ordinary/extraordinary
 - 1. real vs. imagination
 - 2. "Banana Sketch"
- E. Have a beginning, middle and end to a sketch.

XXV. Conclusion

- A. Practice
- B. The benefits of learning mime

XXVI. The Robot

- A. Example
- B. Key Words: 1-2-3/Slow/1-2-3
- C. Explanation
- D. Participation
- E. "The Robot"

EXERCISES

Control of the Face:

1. The Mirror. Get with a partner and stand face to face. One partner moves his face, arms and body with slow economical gestures while the other partner imitates. Switch the role of the partners every two minutes.

Control of the Body:

1. Put one hand face-down at table height. Move your body in a circle around your hand (as if the hand is stuck). Be sure not to move your hand up, down, or back-and-forth.
2. Form a circle of three or more people. Imagine a basketball. One person picks up the ball and passes it to the next. The ball should always stay the same size and weight. After one complete circle change the ball to any other object and continue as before.
3. Have a table set up with several objects on it. Practice picking up an object in slow motion, leaving pauses after every movement. Then try picking up an imaginary form of the same object. After you feel you are successful, go on to another object.
4. Form a group of two or more people. Decide on a machine to act out. Act out the function, purpose, and perhaps attitude of the machine. Do not use props or sounds.
5. Get with a partner and stand five to ten feet apart. Using an imaginary object such as a ball, have one person throw it to the other and then back. Allow time for the object to travel through the air and allow for the impact of the object when you catch it.

Creating Characters:

1. Form a group of two or more people. Fill a paper bag with objects and place it in the center of the group (umbrella, cane, hats, scarf, sweater). One at a time, the group takes an object and uses it as an imaginary character. Then they put the object down and recreate the same character through mime.
2. Form a group of three or more and assign a character to each person. Have one person start to act out their character in any situation. One at a time, send the other people into the situation until the entire group of characters are involved. This exercise is to be done in silence, speaking only with actions. The only rule to this exercise is that no one can disagree with another character. This will keep the participants from stopping to say, "I wasn't doing that, I was doing this."
3. Using the game "charades" as an exercise for mime is helpful. The only change is that all objects of the charade must be acted without the use of hand signals for syllables.

Creating Sketches:

1. Form a group of three or more. One person tells a story out loud while the others act out the story through mime.
2. A person out of the group gives the name of a place (north pole, church, pigpen, school, etc...). The individual or pair must act out a situation typically found in that place. The audience will guess where they are.
3. Pick an action such as throwing paper in a trash can. One at a time, each member of the group creates a sketch that concludes the sketch with that action.

Creating Imaginary Objects:

1. A person gives the name of a place (child's room, pool hall, doctor's office, coal mine, etc...). The person has one minute to create three imaginary objects found there. The imaginary objects are then presented through mime.

MIME QUIZ

1. Why do we use the diaphragm in mime? _____
_____.
2. Name the five sections of the body. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
4. _____ 5. _____
3. A mime moves with _____ action.
4. A mime moves the body in three directions called: Isolations, Rotations, and
_____.
5. Name the two key words for performing the wall illusion.
_____ and _____.
6. What is the first step before performing or practicing mime?
_____.
7. What are the three sections of a story line? _____, _____
_____ and _____.
8. The rotations are the _____ movements of the body.
9. Name three of the many elements used in the process of creating a mime sketch.
1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____
10. Name one benefit of mime for the performer.
_____.

Mime Quiz Answers

1. - Breathing with the diaphragm is silent and not noticeable.
 - Using the diaphragm allows the performer to take in more air.
 - Using the diaphragm keeps the shoulders straight.
 - It is necessary for the neutral position.
2. head, neck, chest, waist and pelvis
3. exaggerated
4. Transtations
5. Relax/Flat
6. warm-up
7. beginning, middle and end
8. circular or turning
9. - What is the purpose?
 - Who is the audience?
 - Brainstorm.
 - Use a theme.
 - Use illusions you already know.
 - Make the ordinary extraordinary.

* Any number of answers can be given for #9. The purpose of this question is for the student to use his/her imagination.
10. - Helps a person become more observant.
 - Teaches discipline.
 - Makes you aware of how you react to things.
 - Strengthens the body.
 - Teaches control of the body.
 - Mime creates another form of communication.

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