

Theatre For Social Change : *An Introduction*

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<https://Gluckprogram.ucr.edu>

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Introduction

Are you passionate about theatre and want to know how your passion can change you and your community? Are you curious to find new inventive ways to cause change and do social work?

There is a theatre discipline called Theatre for Social Change that can do both those things. This theatre practice is still evolving and growing. Through this packet you will receive an introduction to three of its most prominent and significant originators and creators. There are also theatre warm up exercises, quizzes and informational sheets on more for and about theatre for social change.

This discipline combines education with social activism, therefore don't focus on the product or "production" aspect of theatre. Rather instead focus on your own process and your peers' journey. The result of you engaging in self-reflective art such as this branch of theatre will result in you becoming a better individual and therefore changing the world around you into a better place.

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Syllabus

"Theatre for Social Change : An introduction" Course

Created by:

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Intended for:

High School and up, basic level of expertise with theatre.

***Disclaimer: This course is very process oriented NOT product/performance oriented.*

Course materials:

- Access to these worksheets/visual aid.
- People (minimum of four) to create/recreate the detailed theatre exercises.
- Notebook and writing utensils.

Course Introduction:

Learn the basics of Theatre for Social Change, in this introductory workshop you will learn who created it and what are its most commonly known terms. You will do several improvisational theatre games that will engage you physically, mentally and socially. As any theatre form it is best learned and done with a peer group. Through this hands-on experience you (and your peers/volunteers/participants) will develop awareness of your place in the world and how you can impact it through the theatre practice known as Theatre for Social Change.

Learning Outcomes and Objectives:

By the end of this lesson plan you will: Be able to **identify** Augusto Boal, Luis Valdez and other theatre for social change (TFSC) originators and terms like dialogical process and Teatro Campesino. You will **perform** several improvisational theatre games that are part of TFSC and **evaluate** the effectiveness of the exercises and your own social impact and relevance in your day to day lives.

Common Core Learning Objectives

Knowledge: Theatre for Social Change is the union of theatre practices with social activism/awareness. Its impact is seen in many educational, performing and community groups.

Execution: You and your participants will learn the basics of its creation, originators and key terms. Acting will be done through improvisational theatre games of different scenarios that show variations of conflicts and how an awareness of one-self can lead to better resolutions, among other practices that help you and your community as a whole.

Reflection: Participants will have the opportunity to discuss the effectiveness of the improvised re-enactments. There will be a room to share first impressions and their overall takeaways from the workshop.

Section 1: Introduction of theatre for social change (TFSC)

1) Topic Visual Aid Presentation :

This is an informative video- powerpoint slide- presentation (available as a PDF as well) of the overall history of Theatre for Social Change in brief.

2) Originators and their pedagogies Worksheet:

A worksheet with some key terms that give a generalized overview of the basics and origins of Theatre For Social Change for your reviewing and easy access.

3) Matching Worksheet:

A worksheet that tests your knowledge of some of the key terms of Theatre for Social Change by mixing and matching the terms or persons to their respective definitions/descriptions. (Answers provided at the bottom of the quiz, no peeking!)

Section 2: Laying the foundation for a safe space

4) What's your Number? ACE Worksheet:

This is a worksheet designed to help you access your number of "childhood trauma". In theatre for social change the safe way to express one's life is by being aware of what's been lived so this helps safely be aware of that, another form of Conscientization. **Be aware this exercise is intended for Highschool Jr.'s and up**

5) Privilege Inventory Worksheet:

This sheet invites you to assess how privileged you may be in certain areas of life. This helps in the practice of theatre for social change because it gives you awareness of your place or privilege or lack of privilege in your present world.

Section 3: Learning the basics of a good warm up & Improvisation

6) Theatre Warm up exercises (Part 1):

In this worksheet you will see two detailed warm up theatre exercises you can do yourself and/or lead others in, that will help in your experience in Theatre for Social Change.

7) Theatre Warm up exercises (Part 2):

This worksheet is part 2 of more theatre warm up exercises , two as well, to explore and ready yourself for your TFSC practices.

8) Theatre Warm up exercises (Part 3):

This worksheet is part 3 of more exercises , but this time focusing on the vocal aspects of a theatre warm up.

9) Improvisation Basics:

In this worksheet you'll learn five simple universal rules of improv and how it connects to TFSC.

Section 4: Theatre for social change (Exercises)

10) What is a Tableau?

In this worksheet you will learn what a Tableau means. You will also understand how a Tableau is part of all essential branches and aims of theatre for social change.

11) Forum Theatre is...: An Introduction

This worksheet is to explain Forum theatre, it's history, use and practice in a brief manner.

12) Teatro Campesino is...: An Introduction

Through this worksheet you will learn what is defined as Teatro Campesino. means. You will also understand how it is yet another component of theatre for social change.

Section 5: Resources for more into theatre for social change

13) Further resources:

A worksheet where there is a list of books and some youtube links for further study into the discipline of Theatre for Social Change.

14) Acknowledgements and Contact information

Section 1:

Introduction of theatre for social change (TFSC)

1) A - Topic Visual Aid Presentation

1) B- Originators and their pedagogies Worksheet

1) C- Matching Worksheet

Theatre for Social Change : An Introduction

(From: Topic Visual Aid Theatre for Social Change video)

Expectations:

You will receive a brief introduction to the creation and practice of the theatre technique known as Theatre for Social Change (TFSC). The goal of the course is to inform you of its originators and specific terms used in the TFSC world.

Objectives:

The main objective is to invite you into the basics of this socially aware performing arts practice, hoping to intrigue you enough to discover more. This workshop is relevant to any participant's life because it shows the power of socially aware theatre practices and the impact that can have on our mental, physical and social well-being.

Theatre for social change is:

Theatre for social change is a performance ensemble theatre technique to raise awareness about the impact of social issues through community engagement processes. It is a theatre practice that wishes to build bridges of better communication among individuals and communities, bringing self and social awareness to the forefront at its core.

Theatre for Social Change is an evolving discipline that has many originators and branches with a varied history...let's start exploring some key creators and their concepts.

Paulo Friere

Was a Brazilian educator and philosopher who wrote the book **"Pedagogy of the**



Oppressed". In this book he explained the relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor. The importance of a **"Dialogical Approach"** to teaching where Students and Teachers are equals.

Freire's **conscientization**, means the ways in which individuals and communities develop a critical understanding of their social reality through reflection and action. This

involves examining/ acting on the root causes of oppression as experienced in the here and now. The theatre practice he popularized/used was **street theatre**.

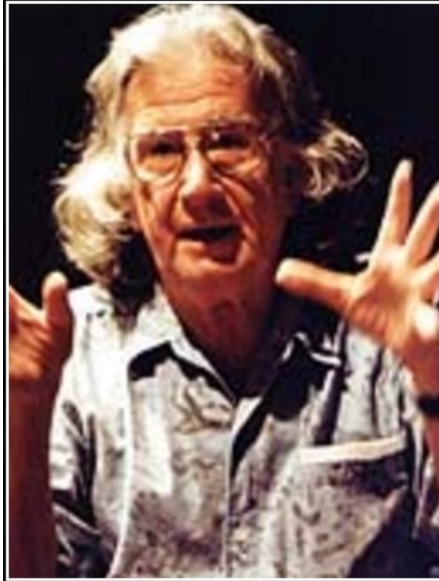
Augusto Boal



was a Brazilian theatre practitioner, drama theorist, and political activist. He founded the **Theatre of the Oppressed**, used in radical left popular education movements. Influenced by Paulo Friere. Abbreviated as **"TOTO"**. His book had the same name.

Oppressed is used in the sense of who has lost the right to express wills and needs, and is reduced to the condition of an obedient listener of a monologue.

Forum Theatre. Aims to empower marginalized groups and their allies, by rehearsing creative collaborative problem solving. This is now a common practice in TFSC originated by Boal.

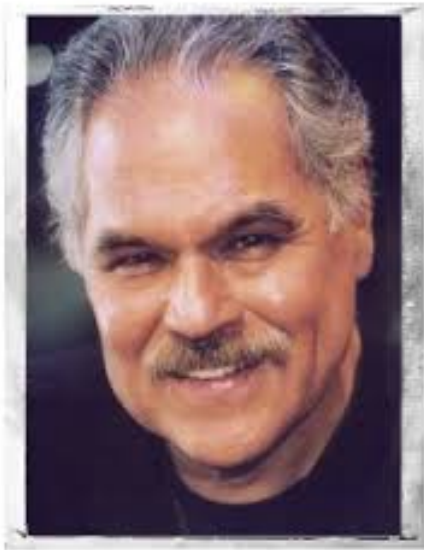


Theatre is a form of knowledge; it should and can also be a means of transforming society. Theatre can help us build our future, rather than just waiting for it.

— *Augusto Boal* —

AZ QUOTES

Luis Valdez *and Teatro Campesino*



Chicano, playwright, director and creator of the theatre company and movement called (The Farm Workers Theatre) or in its original language Spanish: **Teatro Campesino.**

Luis Valdez with Cesar Chavez and the United Farmers Workers union created "Las Dos Caras del Patroncito and Quinta Temporada".

These were short plays written to encourage campesinos to leave the fields and join the UFW).

Most famous play is "**Zoot Suit**"

Originators and their pedagogies: Review

Paolo Friere:

- He was a Brazilian educator and philosopher who created “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”. In it he introduced key terms like who is the oppressor and who is the oppressed. He explained the importance of *conscientization*.
- Conscientization is the process of becoming self-aware, which means the ways in which individuals and communities develop a *critical understanding* of their social reality through reflection and action.
 - This involves examining and acting on the root causes of oppression as experienced in the here and now. 80 % of solving the problem is naming the problem that is where Conscientization takes part.
- Lastly he also introduced the importance of a Dialogical Approach meaning an equal communication between Teacher and Student.

Augusto Boal:

- He was influenced by Paulo Friere and he was a Brazilian theatre practitioner, drama theorist, and political activist. He was the founder of Theatre of the Oppressed, a theatrical form originally used in radical left popular education movements.
 - His pedagogy is found in the book “Theatre of the Oppressed”
- The word Oppressed is used in the sense of s/he who has lost the right to express his/her wills and needs, and is reduced to the condition of obedient listener of a monologue. It must be used as an instrument of concrete social transformation, a tool of fighting against all forms class oppression, racism, sexism, and all kinds of discrimination.

- He initiated *Forum Theatre*. The aim of Forum theatre can best be defined as: It's practice seeks to give power to marginalized populations and their allies through the rehearsal of creative collaborative problem solving.

Luis Valdez:

- Luis Valdez is presently a Chicano playwright, which means Mexican American, he was also a director and the father of teatro campesino (the farm workers theatre). He founded this theatre practice in 1965 and it is still practiced today. This practice became popular during the Mexican Revolution. All of these short, one-act plays were designed to instruct and inspire an uneducated population to seek education and stand up to their oppressors.

- Besides Chicano Theatre he also wrote other plays among its most recognized work being "Zoot Suit" which is a play about "Sleepy Lagoon Trial of 1942" and the "Zoot Suit Riots of 1943". This is also the first Chicano play to be produced on Broadway and adapted as a film.

Other Concepts to know for TFSC:

Improvisation : To come up with an idea or solve an issue then and there. In the performing arts there are different types of improvisation.

Long form, Short form, Yes and...

Tableau: is defined as a group of models or motionless figures representing a scene from a story or from history; a tableau vivant. A living picture used in theatre for social change to illustrate a story.



THEATRE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

MATCHING TERMS WORKSHEET



Match the terms on the left to the correct ones on the right hand side:

1.

Created Teatro
Campesino

Playback
Theatre

2.

Social
Change

Social
Awareness Breeds

3.

A form of Theatre
for Social Change

Augusto
Boal

4.

Created Epic
Theatre

Toto

5.

Theatre of the
Oppressed Tools

Brecht

6.

Created by
Augusto Boal

Luis
Valdez

7.

Created "Theatre
of the Oppressed"

Paulo
Freire

8.

Created "Pedagogy
of the Oppressed"

Conscientization

9.

Becoming
Self-Aware

Forum
Theatre



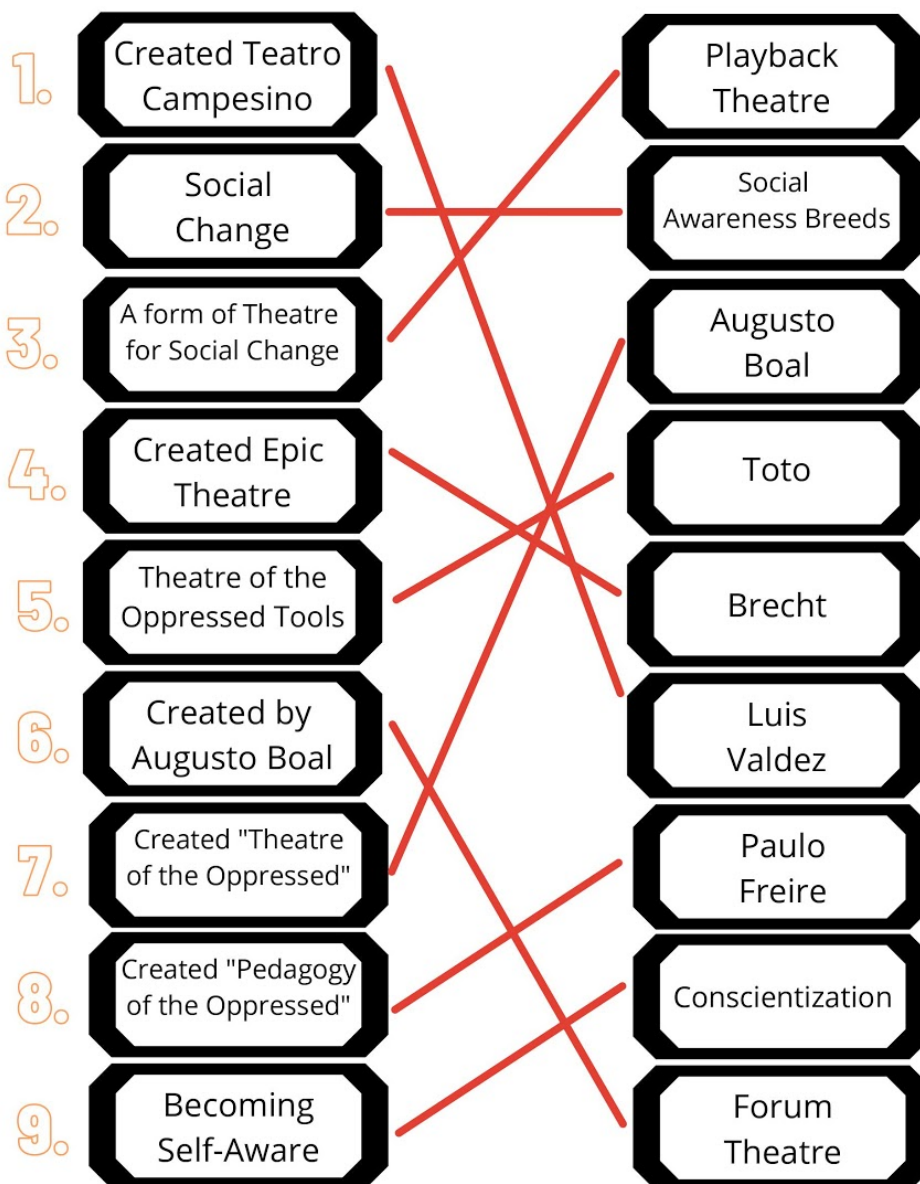


THEATRE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

ANSWER SHEET



Check your answers:



Section 2:

Laying the foundation for a safe space

- 2)A - What's your Number? ACE Worksheet
- 2) B- Privilege Inventory Worksheet

ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Quiz

Introduction and importance of self-assessment quizzes:

**Disclaimer* This worksheet is preferred to be interacted with and answered by ages: Juniors in highschool and up. There may be trigger questions and statements so please interact with as aware and safely as possible.*

Theatre is a discipline that combines many things at once, so is specifically Theatre for Social Change. This is a process based performing arts discipline so learn to enjoy the process and not worry about results. **Before you can help others you must know yourself!**

The following is a short questionnaire created by the ACE'S Connection (Adverse Childhood Experiences) which is an organization that tries to bring awareness to our own experiences and offer tools of self improvement. To learn more of their work you can visit their website: <https://www.acesconnection.com/blog/got-your-ace-resilience-scores>

Theatre for social change is a multi-disciplinary (means many disciplines) art form and one of the disciplines it includes is psychology. But don't worry! We don't need to know all things psych to understand how important it is to know ourselves and our backgrounds.

When you answer the following questions be as honest with yourself as you can. This can also be a group activity that helps bring you and your peers closer. Remember everything that is shared is meant to be confidential and met with a level of empathy necessary to practice theatre for social change safely.

To give you even more context, the ACE Connection explains the following that there are 10 types of childhood trauma measured in the ACE Study. Five are personal -- physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, physical neglect, and emotional neglect.

Five are related to other family members: a parent who's an alcoholic, a mother who's a victim of domestic violence, a family member in jail, a family member diagnosed with a mental illness, and the disappearance of a parent through divorce, death or abandonment.

For example to understand your score each type of trauma counts as one whole point. So a person who's been physically abused, with one alcoholic parent, and a mother who was beaten up has an ACE score of three.

Don't get overly concerned if you happen to have a high ACE score, this study does not factor in the positive aspects of your childhood. If you seek more knowledge on the subject look on the website for more detailed explanation of what the ACE score means. For a theatre for social change practitioner as yourself what is most important from doing this questionnaire is the practice of self-awareness. As well as it can be a good talking/bonding experience to do with your peers before delving into the intricacies of performing any of the theatre for social change exercises.

You either get a full 1 point or 0 none, again make sure to answer these questions as truthfully as you can. Don't forget to feel recharged with the strength that comes from knowing where you once were but not where you are now. You are resilient and have come a long way!

Answer the following questions to get your ACE score:

Prior to your 18th birthday:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Swear at you, insult you, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that makes you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
No___ If Yes, enter 1 __
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or ever hit you so hard that you were injured?
No___ If Yes, enter 1 __
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever... Touch or fondle or have you touch their body in a sexual way?
No___ If Yes, enter 1 __
4. Did you often or very often feel that ... No one in your family loved you or thought you were important? or Your family didn't feel close to each other, or support each other?
No___ If Yes, enter 1 __
5. Did you often or very often feel that ... You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, no one to protect you? or Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you?
No___ If Yes, enter 1 __
6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced? No___ If Yes, enter 1 __
7. Was your mother or stepmother: Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? or Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife? No___ If Yes, enter 1 __
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?
No___ If Yes, enter 1 __
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or attempt suicide?
No___ If Yes, enter 1 __
10. Did a household member go to prison? No___ If Yes, enter 1 __

Make sure to add up your ACE score and read into what your score may mean at

<https://www.acesconnection.com/blog/got-your-ace-resilience-scores> .

Privilege Inventory

This following questionnaire is not point based. This is for you as a Theatre For Social Change participant to have a base knowledge of how privileged or unprivileged you are in comparison to your community, peers etc.

Step 1: If you are to lead this exercise please take inventory of yourself first.

Step 2: Suggest to your peers, volunteers, theatre troupe etc. to answer honestly.

Step 3: Discuss on realizing their own/your own privilege or lack thereof impacts you.

Step 4: If taking this test to a larger community to foster self awareness, make sure to discuss and reassure the participants that this privilege inventory does not mean guilt or shame.

The left column are the questions, there is no right or wrong, just self accountability and reflection. The right column categorizes what each of these questions and your privilege inventory of them connects with. Race for example is defined as “a category of humankind that shares certain distinctive physical traits.” The term ethnicities is more broadly defined as “large groups of people classed according to common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin or background.”

SES is an abbreviation of socio-economic status, which relates to your financial income, surrounding etc. and what set of opportunities or lack thereof can come from that, therefore what privileges come from your economic and social status. There are other underlying factors like: age, gender, body type, physical or mental disability etc. that carry within a privilege or lack of.

For theatre for social change to be done effectively self awareness is key and this (as well as the ACE test) serves that purpose. This will lead to honest discussions, introspection and a view on what areas you may have less perspective in due to your privilege. To be clear there is no blame in privilege or lack of, but the way to self-awareness and be of service to your community is by knowing your place in it.

Privileges Inventory

1	If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure that I can rent or purchase a home in an area I can afford, would want to live in, and would feel welcome.	Race, ethnicity, religious, SES, sexual orientation
2	If I ask to talk to the person in charge, I'm confident that I will face a person similar to me.	Race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, SES
3	If I ask towards a security checkpoint in the airport, I can feel that I will not be looked upon as suspect.	ethnicity,
4	If I walk into an emergency room I can expect to be treated with dignity and respect.	Race, ethnicity, physical/mental ability, SES, sexual orientation, body type.
5	If I walk through a parking garage at night I don't have to feel vulnerable.	Gender, age, body type
6	I can easily buy posters, books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, and children's magazines featuring people who look like me.	Race, ethnicity, body type
7	I can easily trust that anyone I'm speaking to will understand the meaning of my words.	Education, language, physical/mental ability
8	I can feel confident that my customers/teachers feel that I am smart upon first impression.	Race, ethnicity, age, gender, body type
9	When someone asks where I'm from, I simply think that it's because they're being friendly.	Ethnicity, language, physical ability
10	My employer/school gives days off for the holidays that are most important to me.	Ethnicity, religion
11	I can come to work/school early or stay late whenever needed and know that my family will be cared for.	Gender, SES
12	I can speak in a roomful of equals in my field and feel that I am heard.	Ethnicity, gender, age, language, race, SES, physical ability
13	I can go home from most classes/meeting feeling somewhat engaged, rather than isolated, out-of-place, or unheard.	Ethnicity, gender, age, language, race, physical ability
14	I can look at the cafeteria menu and expect to see that the special of the day reflects my culture's traditional foods.	Ethnicity, religion, race
15	My age adds to my credibility.	Age, (gender?), SES.
16	My body stature is consistent with an image of success.	Gender, race, body type, physical ability
17	I can bring my partner to a school/ office gathering without thinking twice.	Sexual orientation
18	I can be sure that if I need legal, medical, or financial help, my race will not work against me.	Race
19	I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having coworkers on the job suspect that I got it because of race or gender.	Gender, race
20	I feel confident that if I don't understand something then it wasn't written clearly enough for most others to understand.	Education, language, ethnicity
21	I can feel confident that if a family member requires hospital or emergency treatment they would be treated with dignity and respect.	Ethnicity, physical/mental ability, SES, race, sexual orientation
22	I can feel confident that if a family member comes to visit this university, they would be treated with dignity and respect.	Ethnicity, physical/mental ability, SES, race, sexual orientation
23	I have no medical conditions or cultural/religious dietary restrictions that require special arrangements or that makes others see me as different.	Religion, physical/mental ability

Section 3:

Learning the basics of a good warm up & Improvisation

3) A - Theatre Warm up exercises (Part 1)

3) B - Theatre Warm up exercises (Part 2)

3) C- Theatre Warm up exercises (Part 3)

3) D- Improvisation Basics

Warm up games (Part 1):

***Disclaimer: Before doing any of these bonding/warm up theatre exercises/games make sure to do a physical body warm up. That means gently stretching your arms, legs, head, hands and back. Remember to breathe and to not lock your knees as you find a safe, convenient way to physically stretch and warm up your body.*

Now it's time to play!

#1) Land and Sea:

This exercise is like "Simon says" but with only two simple steps. The rules are as follows: draw an "imaginary" line on the floor, delineating how one side will be considered "Sea" and the opposite side of it considered "Land". Stand on the land side for the game to commence, someone (it can also be you as you play) will be in charge of yelling land or sea.

When each location is called that is the correct place where you and your friends should be standing. For the person yelling the locations their goal is to be fast enough and creative enough for the participants to choose wrong and be in the incorrect location "Land" or "Sea".

For you who will play the game and your peers joining in on the fun the main goal is to: listen sharply, be agile, be clear in making a prompt choice, be creative as you are exploring your version of "land" or "sea" and above all have fun!

#2) Name Game:

The purpose of this game is, you guessed it to learn your group/participants name in a creative way. Standing in a closed circle facing each other, one person must start by saying their preferred name accompanied by a physical and/or vocal gesture.

For example my name is Esther and my physical gesture can be a jumping jack. Now the next person on either side of me who wants to go next will have to repeat my name (Esther) and my gesture (jumping jack). Then they will add their name and gesture and the game will continue until everyone in the circle has said their name, there should be no repeated gestures. A gesture and the other name and gestures that have gone before will continue until they circle back to the first person who started the game which in this example would be me (Esther, jumping jack).

This is also a game to test your memory and retention skills, to challenge you to not overthink but follow your impulse and do the first gesture that comes to mind as well as learn your friends' names!

Warm up games (Part 2):

***Disclaimer: Before doing any of these bonding/warm up theatre exercises/games make sure to do a physical body warm up. That means gently stretching your arms, legs, head, hands and back. Remember to breathe and to not lock your knees as you find a safe, convenient way to physically stretch and warm up your body.*

Now it's time to play!

#3) Follow the leader:

This exercise is like a mirror exercise but in motion. What do I mean by "mirror exercise"? Glad you asked it means to follow exactly whatever movements your designated reflection is doing. This reflection is also called "the Leader". Be aware of your surroundings and your own physical limitations, don't excerpt yourself while following your leader. Leaders make sure that when you are moving you are being as creative and limber as possible.

The purpose of the exercise is to be accepting of someone else following the lead, being versatile and limber as well as being creative. After playing a warm up game like this I guarantee you and your group of friends/volunteers will feel more at ease with each other. It can also be a large group game if one designated "leader" is the leader for everyone else. Make the game more dynamic by changing the "leader" as frequent as you can, this again will encourage fast thinking from everyone participating.

#4) Walk at a pace of... at a...angle/ Also known as The coordinates:

This exercise is particularly great if you have a designated place of rehearsal/exploration. It is good to get to know the place where you will be creating. Taking turns someone will be the coordinates giver- that person will say walk at a pace of ___ at a _ angle.

To determine the pace, keep the scale from one to ten. One being complete stillness, five being normal walking pace, ten being as fast as you can move and the intermediate numbers everywhere in between. To determine the angles you have three choices, change direction at a ninety degree angle (meaning a sharp right or left), a hundred and eighty (meaning a complete turn-around towards the other direction) and three-hundred and sixty (meaning making a spin and continuing in your original walking direction).

By adding the simultaneous instructions of pace (how fast or how slow) and an angle (indicating direction) this will help you and your peers know your own limits and extremes in movement. As being acquainted with your working space and observant of how others move.

Warm up Exercises (Part 3):

These are vocal warm ups and relaxation techniques to prepare your body for optimal focus.

Now it's time to Focus!

#5) Face, tongue and pitch exercises:

Tongue

- Extend your tongue as far out as it can go five times.
- Lick the outside of your lips in a circular motion (three times each way)
- Lick the inside of your teeth in a circular motion (three times each way)

Face

- Scrunch up your face and expand as if trying to scare somebody five times.
- Rub your palms fast and with the bottom half of your palms, place them at the start of your jaw and drag them towards your chin releasing all tensions (repeat twice)
- With your fingertips gently massage your face and neck of any tensions.

Pitch

- With your mouth closed start at your highest pitch and descend into your lower register.
- Blow raspberries (your tongue like a speedboat) also from high to low.

#6) Tongue twisters, importance of vowels, dragon breath:

Popular tongue twisters (a few)

- How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?
- Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. How many pickled peppers did Peter Piper pick?
- (Spanish) Pablito clavo un clavito un clavito clavó pablito

Vowels

A E I O U - Projecting and enunciating as best as you can connect the vowels in the following fashion AA, AE, AI, AO, AU and then start with the next vowel EA, EE and so on and so forth. Take your time and exaggerate to get better results.

Dragon breath

Breathe in and deep at your own pace. Dragon breath is a diaphragm engaging breath that is not extremely known. You are to breathe only through your nose (as a baby dragon would) quickly. Engage your diaphragm and make sure your stomach is expanding and contracting as you breathe throughout.

What is Improvisation?

and

How is it needed in TFSC?

On our day to day lives just like in theatre the word **improvisation**, improv or to improvise carries a similar meaning- *to come up with an idea or solve an issue then and there. In the performing arts there are different types of improvisation.*

Long form improv: is the improvisation most people are used too or recognize as improv. That is when trained comedians and actors ask the audience to name a location and different scenarios. Once the audience suggestions are in, the players performed an improvised scene out of those established audience suggested parameters.

A very popular show that displays this form of improv is called “Whose line is it Anyway?”. There are also schools of this type of improvisation, some distinguished ones being the Groundlings in California and the Upright Citizens Brigade in New York. If you want to see a contemporary form of this type of improvisation there is a comedy special on Netflix named “Middleditch and Schwartz”.

Improv is a big part of theatre for social change. This is because in the many branches and practices of theatre for social change a big component of what we do is learning how to bring about change in yourself and your community.

As you will see through the detailed exercises (refer to table of contents) you will see that the TFSC practice called Playback Theatre requires a good handle on improv. Performers are taking the speaker's story and facts and creating a short scene they “playback” to the speaker. Then and there without much planning or rehearsing, which is why improv is such a unique skill to hone.

Similar to long form is **short form improv** which has the same components of longform but in a shorter span. The big rules of Improv can be boiled down to these:

1) The Yes and... principle

This is the quintessential rule in improv. When your scene partner or group introduces a new idea, scenario, character, etc. your job is to say “Yes and...”. By saying Yes you are acknowledging that you’ve heard your partner, agree and process the information given. When you say And, you are introducing what you will add to the scene or who your title in the scene is.

For example: Player A says “I am a fairy Godmother in search of my next goddaughter” then player B says “yes and I happen to be Cinderella and have called on you my fairy Godmother”.

Now the audience knows the location and roles of the players and the characters they represent. This scene can take many twists and turns but at its core the scene will always be effective when the players follow the YES AND.. principle.

2) Learn to listen!

3) Follow your instincts

4) Don’t overthink!

5) Have fun! (I know it sound’s cliché but truly!)

Section 4:

Theatre for social change (Exercises)

4) A - What is a Tableau?

4) B- Forum Theatre is...: An Introduction

4) C- Teatro Campesino is...: An Introduction

What is a Tableau?

A Tableau is defined as a group of models or motionless figures representing a scene from a story or from history; a tableau vivant. In the performing arts and one of them being theatre (including theatre for social change) instead of models we use ourselves and our bodies. We are those still figures that adjust and change accordingly to represent a specific scene or set of scenes to tell a unified story.

In french the actual word is "Tableau Vivant " or "Tableaux" which means living picture. This is a static scene containing one or more actors or models. They are stationary and silent, usually in costume, carefully posed, with props and/or scenery, and may as well be theatrically lit.



But for the purposes of theatre for social change, costumes, props and scenery are not required. The use of a Tableau in theatre for social change is to invite anyone who wants to participate to participate. To participate as they are and as they come. Through a tableau an audience or community who chooses to share their stories, their circumstances can see their story reflected through the movement and still images in a tableau.

For example to execute a successful working tableau exercise in a TFSC manner you first need a volunteer. Said volunteers can share whatever is in their heart and minds. Then it is the ensemble's job to hear what the audience member shared and come up with creative ways to illustrate that story through still images or tableaux.

You may identify Tableau in other art forms like photography or painting even dancing, but for theatre it is different. Refer to the

images of how different tableaux can look like in theatre. It is important to include all ensemble members in the process and also if there are levels it makes the tableau more visually stimulating.



When using a tableau for TFSC make it specific, refer back to the volunteer who shared their story at all times. Check in with them to see if they feel they were heard and if the tableau was effective in displaying their story.

The effectiveness of TFSC is to give voice to those who feel voiceless or unseen and by seeing their stories visualized before their own eyes they can now have that power and use it to better communicate and so on.

The following image is from a Tableau made by the theatre for social change class of University of Riverside, California in Winter 2020 under the instruction of Professor Mercedes Islas and myself as a teaching assistant (Esther Banegas Gatica). In class a volunteer shared how she has many responsibilities daily that feel are pulling at her from all sides constantly. With that description the TFSC ensemble represented the following Tableau found below-

As you see the following image ask yourself these questions:

- What story do you feel this image (tableau) is trying to tell?
- What feelings and thoughts does this tableau ignite in you?
- Do you feel the tableau successfully illustrates the above example of a story shared by a volunteer?
- Is said Tableau universal in its illustration?



Forum Theatre is...

Forum theatre is one of the most popular forms of Theatre for Social Change. This theatre practice was originated by Augusto Boal, a Brazilian theorist, educator and theatre practitioner. His pedagogy was documented in the book titled “Theatre of the Oppressed” abbreviated as TOTO.

The aim of Forum theatre can best be defined as: It's practice seeks to give power to marginalized populations and their allies through the rehearsal of creative collaborative problem solving.

Have you ever had a conflict with a peer you wish you could talk through? How about a better option to act through it? Have you wanted a whole community or group of individuals to learn through practice better communicative/cooperative skills? In Forum Theatre that is what happens.

As naive as it may sound many of the issues that forum theatre attempts to address are issues such as: racism, ageism, sexism, ableism etc. as well as a smaller scale aim like for example microaggressions at work. No topic is off limits!

To perform Forum Theatre there are several games and performances. We will focus on learning the most commonly used form labeled: *Anti-model*. This is when the protagonist of said scene cannot obtain their goal due to any of the above mentioned “isms” such as racism, classicism etc.

Forum Theatre invites the audience to go from Spectator (simply watches) to Spec-Actor (watches and takes action). If you are instructing and leading a group through Forum theatre these are the steps:

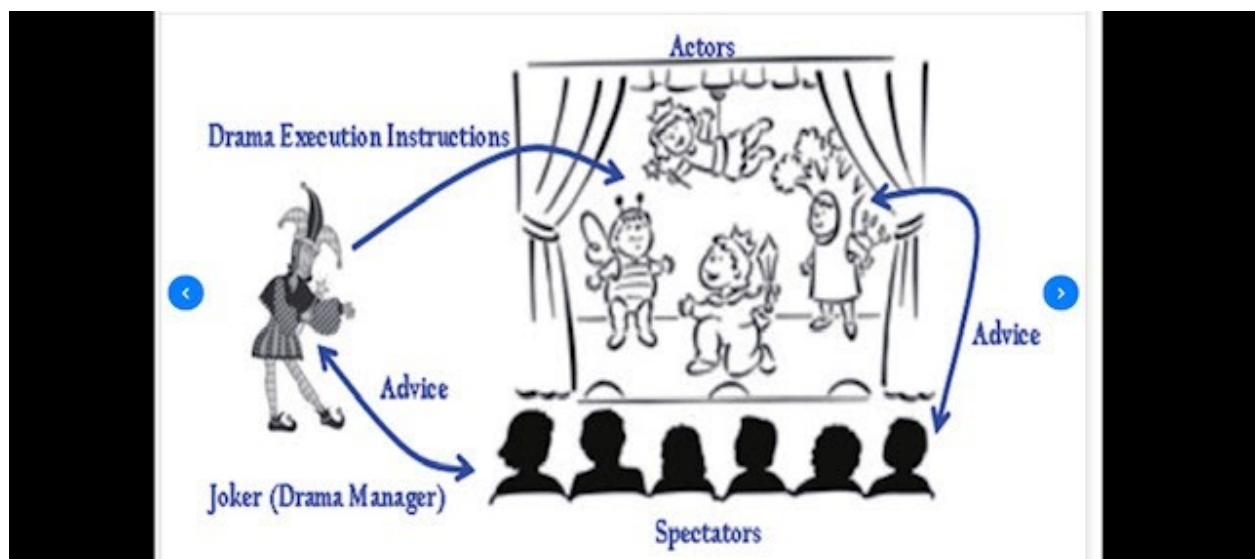
- 1) A scene or circumstance is shown as a regular theatre scene.
- 2) The presenter (that's you) also known as the Joker is there describing in detail what has just occurred in the scene.

3) After pointing out any injustices, the jokerster asks the audience (the now deemed spect-actors) to volunteer solutions to the injustice presented in the scene.

4) Instead of only saying a problem solving suggestion, the spect-actor must volunteer themselves to go onstage and become the character he/she is replacing.

5) Now that the audience has seen the scene replayed but with the spect-actor choosing a more appropriate course of action.

6) Through this process, that can be done multiple times and interpreted by as many spect-actors as the scenario sees fit, a new collective consciousness of how to better communicate and effect change has been shown and practiced. Therefore theatre is used as a *tool* for *social change*.



***Photo credit to: <https://dramaresource.com/forum-theatre/>

***To see the above breakdown of how Forum Theatre works in actual practice go to the further resources page and under Forum Theatre see the Youtube video for a Ted Talk made by Shannon Ivey at Columbia, SC.

Teatro Campesino is...

A theatre practice that is part of the theatre for social change family. It was originated by the one and only Luis Valdez. Luis Valdez, still living, is a playwright, director and theatre practitioner who in 1965 originated the movement now identified as Chicano Theatre. He has received many awards including a 2015 National Medal of Arts. Luis himself is a Chicano, which is slang for Mexican-American. Teatro Campesino means Farmer's Worker Theatre.

With the collaboration of Cesar Chavez and the United Farmers Workers Union, they intended to bring conscientization and awareness to many working farmers who were on strike. The first "Actos" which are short play vignettes, were written by Luis Valdez in collaboration.

These were called "Las dos caras del patroncito" and "Quinta temporada". Through these and many more short plays to come, they would educate the farm workers. Since several farm workers were illiterate, a play where characters act and talk was the quickest most direct way to educate and empower them.

The success of "Teatro Campesino" and why it is a large component of what is defined as theatre for social change is because many of the performances are done in non theatrical spaces, with limited costuming and props.

Most of their performances were made in the beds of trucks and near the picket lines where farmers would unite in protest. The actors would wear around their necks the labels of the characters that they were portraying. They would illustrate different scenarios, just like in Forum Theatre, to show the farmers how they were being taken advantage of by their employers.

In all theatre for social change practices, we are seeking for the audience to learn and incorporate what was learned into their day to day lives. For you to incorporate Teatro Campesino practices you would need minimal set, clothing and props. The more direct the story you are telling the more educational it becomes.

Nowadays “Teatro Campesino” as a theatre company still exists in San Juan Bautista California since 1971. They have won several awards over all these years including an Obie, Emmy, Peabody award and numerous Los Angeles Drama Critics Awards to mention a few.

Something as well noteworthy is that Luis Valdez wrote the play “Zoot Suit” which is about the “Sleepy lagoon trials of 1942” and the “Zoot Suit riots of 1943” all part of Los Angeles urban history. This play became the first chicano play to be produced on Broadway and then adapted to film.



Section 5:

Resources for more into theatre for social change

5) A - Further resources:

5) B- Acknowledgements and Contact information

Recommended Books:

- Paulo Freire Pedagogy of the Oppressed - Book
- Augusto Boal - Theatre of the Oppressed - Book
- Luis Valdez
Zoot Suit - Book (Play) - Book

Self- Assessing tools for self-awareness prior to doing Theatre for Social Change:

- Alternate website where to take the ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Quiz

<https://www.acesconnection.com/blog/got-your-ace-resilience-scores>

<https://www.safelaunch.org/aces-quiz/>

Improvisation

- Whose line is it anyway? - TV show - CW
- Middleditch and Schwartz - TV show - Netflix

Forum Theatre

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vcLcXeXJVDU>
- <https://dramaresource.com/forum-theatre/>

Teatro Campesino

- <https://elteatrocampesino.com/about-luis/>
- <https://blogs.sjsu.edu/humanities-arts/2015/02/16/el-teatro-campesino/>

Conclusion I hope you had a great time working and learning through this packet. This was simply an introduction to theatre for social change and I truly hope you are curious enough and excited to continue learning more.

Never forget we can be the change we wanna see in the world and theatre can be one of those tools used for that change. This is a picture of me doing Theatre For Social Change for children!



Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank Professor Mercedes Floresislal for being my first teacher on this beautiful theatre discipline. I would also like to thank and honor Luis Valdez, Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal for being such pioneers of this inspiring, revolutionizing theatre form. Thank you Febe for your help! I would like to thank the Gluck Program, Christine G. Leapman and the University of California for the exciting opportunity to create this curriculum and share it with whoever feels interested. Let's go be agents of change, Gracias!

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