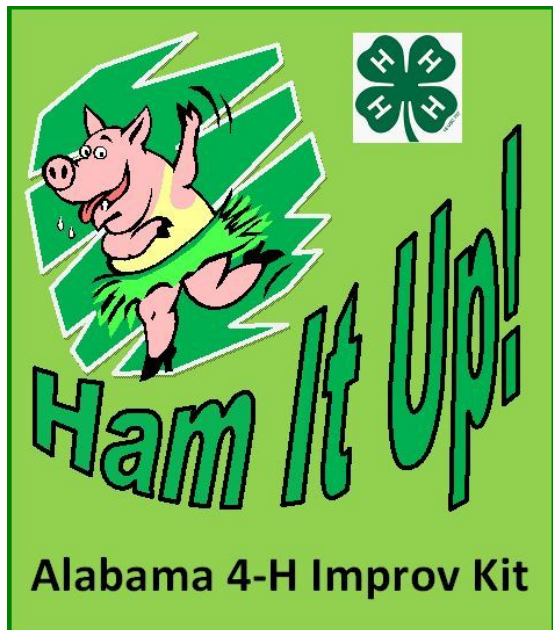


Ham It Up – The Alabama 4-H Improv Club Kit



Improvise:

1. to compose, recite, play, or sing without advanced preparation (extemporaneously)
2. to make, invent, or arrange offhand
3. to make or fabricate out of what is on hand

Quick Thinking

Life Skill:

Communicating with Others
Creating a Story
Improvisation
Public Speaking

Success Indicator:

Youth will practice creativity by producing and telling a story with minimal preparation.

Time: 30 minutes – Depending on Group Size

Suggested Group Size:

Classroom or less

Supplies:

Club kit

Every day we improvise. When we have a conversation with our friends or when we undertake something we have never done before, we “make it up as we go along.”

In lots of movies, the hero or heroine is great at improvisation – they can talk their way out of difficult situations or they can improvise a bomb out of a tube of toothpaste and a rubber duck.

Theater improvisation is a great way for us to practice “thinking on our feet.” It helps us learn to solve problems whenever we don’t have much time to plan.

Do the Activity:

There are two ways to do this activity, depending on the age and skill level of the participants.

Some kids may feel very uncomfortable about doing a public presentation. Don’t pressure them, but encourage them to say at least a sentence or two.

Beginners

Distribute the props from the Club Kit to young people. If there are more students than props, several students may share the same prop.

Instruct the students on the activity:

Make up a silly story about your prop. For example:

- How was your chicken famous in history?
- What super powers do the clown glasses have?
- Is your cup a secret spy device?

Ask the young people to come before the group when they are ready and tell a brief story about the prop – with as many details about “how, when, where, and what” as they wish to give.

Advanced

With older youth, make this a true improvisation. Have a leader conceal the props in the box. Have the leader randomly select props and ask young people to come and tell a story – the more outrageous the better.

Talking It Over

Share What You Did

What did you like about activity?
What was the most difficult part for you?
Which improvisations did you enjoy the most?

If you did the activity several different times, how did it become easier or harder to do?

Process What's Important

How did story tellers make their stories believable?
How did the story tellers make their stories sad or funny or happy?
What real things, such as personal experiences or real animals, were these stories built around?

Generalize to Your Life

What are some times that you may have to improvise in real life?
How does skill at improvisation help you solve problems or create opportunities?

Apply What You Have Learned

When are some times when you might have to improvise in your job – if you were a teacher, a policeman, or in some other profession?
What are the things – the experiences or knowledge – we base our improvisation on in real life?