



The Show Must Go On(line)!

NY Thespian Festival 2021

FULL FESTIVAL TROUPE DIRECTOR PACKET 2021 TABLE OF CONTENTS

All information can be found at <https://www.newyorkthespians.org/thespian-festival.html>

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NEW YORK CHAPTER

New York EdTA
76 Saint James Place Apt. 1A
Brooklyn, NY 11238
917-952-4559

Dear Troupe Director,

I am thrilled to invite you to the 11th Annual NY State Thespian Festival, a celebration of school theater in the Empire State! This year's virtual event will take place online April 23-25. There is a track for middle school, high school, a combination of the two, and teachers. There is truly something for everyone!

Direct registration link can be found here: <https://nythespians.regfox.com/ny-thespian-festival-2021>

I've attached a "how-to" for the registration website.

You and your students have the opportunity to take part in the following. Please note that registration closes April 6 at 11:59pm EST:

- **Workshops** in acting, musical theater, dance, and technical theater
- **Thespys (formerly known as Individual Events)** - students can perform published work for feedback and awards! Categories include acting, musical theatre, light design, scenic (set) design, sound design, costume design, costume construction, makeup design, stage management, theatre marketing (publicity), short film, short documentary, and short animation
- **Annual One Act Festival** - submit a recording of a 5-45 minute-long performance for feedback and trophies! Student written and/or directed work welcomed and encouraged.
- **DemocracyWorks Essay** - all Thespians are eligible to submit a 500-word or less response to this year's prompt: *Throughout history, theater has been used as a social voice. How does theater act as a social voice? Which voices and/or issues still need to be heard and how can theater elevate these voices/issues?*
- **Improv Frenzy** - assemble a four-person team to compete online. Practice together online or at school (if hybrid)! PDF how-to is attached
- **STO (State Thespian Officer) Information** - we are looking for incredible student leaders to plan next year's festival, develop service and advocacy projects, and represent their corner of NY State! Application materials as well as more information available at Festival
- **Scholarships** - scholarship and summer program opportunities available
- **Masked Singer** - Troupe Directors can submit videos of themselves singing a musical theater song either wearing a face covering or using a face-blurring filter. Multiple awards, including audience choice!

Registration materials and additional information can be found by visiting:

<https://www.newyorkthespians.org/thespian-festival.html>

Please reach out if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you at Festival 2021!

Sincerely,

Lindsay Shields

NY Thespians Chapter Director

nythespians@gmail.com

917-952-4559



NY State Thespian Festival 2021



Schedule of Events

[LINK TO REGISTRATION](#)

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY
Friday, April 23	6-7pm	Welcome and Kickoff by STO; Shout Out to attending Troupes and Guest schools; Introduction of Board; Overview of Festival program
	7-8:30pm	One Act Festival Group A
	8:30-9pm	Q&A Sessions for attendees
Saturday, April 24	10am-11am	Workshop #1, Thespy Session #1***, college/scholarship/summer program auditions
	11:10-11:40am	Connection Circles A*
	11:45am-12:45pm	Workshop #2, Thespy Session #2***
	12:45-1:30pm	LUNCH SESSIONS - listen to panelists OR join an affinity group; Scholarship interviews; Q&A sessions/Helpdesk for attendees
	1:35-2:20pm	Keynote Speaker, All-Festival Activity around Arts Advocacy
	2:30-3:30pm	Workshop #3, Freestyle/Playworks
	3:35-4:05pm	Connection Circles B*
	4:10-5:10pm	Workshop #4
	5:15-5:45pm	Connection Circles C*
	6-6:45pm	OPTIONS: panel discussions, Kahoot Theatre Trivia, Q&A sessions/Helpdesk for attendees
	7-8:30pm	One Act Festival Group B
	8:45-9:45pm	OPTIONS: Thespian Masked Singer, Broadway Boogie (a dance to Broadway showtunes)
	9:50-10pm	STO Closing and highlights of the day
Sunday, April 25	10am-11am	Workshop #5, Thespy Session #3***
	11:10-11:40am	Connection Circles D*
	11:45am-12:45pm	Workshop #6, Thespy Session #4***
	12:45-1:30pm	LUNCH SESSIONS - listen to panelists OR join an affinity group; Scholarship interviews (continued)
	1:35-2:05pm	Connection Circles E*
	2:10-3:10pm	Workshop #7
	3:15-3:40pm	Connection Circles F*
	3:45-5pm	Closing Ceremony: Awards, Recognitions, Thank You's, Best-of-Fest, etc.

*- Connection Circles are an opportunity for participants to get to know each other through games and activities. They are led by Student Thespian Officers (STO). Participants will meet in the same Connection Circle each time.

** - The One Act Festival is scheduled for both Friday and Saturday evenings. The schedule and programs for each will be distributed prior to the event. One Acts can be scripted, student written, or devised, 5-45 minutes in length. Friends and family outside of Thespians may purchase tickets to watch and vote for the Audience Choice Awards.

*** - Thespys are “International Thespian Excellence Awards.” These include monologues (2 contrasting, 3 minutes max.), duet scenes, group scenes, solo musical singing, duet musical singing, group musical singing, light design, set design, sound design, costume design, costume construction, makeup, publicity, short film, and stage management. Thespys slots will be assigned based on category. Rubrics are available on the NY Thespians website.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING TO ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS:

(most programs require upload to Open Water - see explanation video on how to upload on the NY Thespians website!)

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	RUBRIC/ADJUDICATION
Thespys (open to ALL, only Thespians can receive awards)	Categories include acting, musical theatre performance, costume construction, costume design, light design, makeup design, scenic (set) design, sound design, stage management, theatre marketing (publicity), short film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thespys Upload Link 	<i>MORE DETAILS IN THIS PACKET AND ON THE WEBSITE</i>
DemocracyWorks (open to Thespians only)	Students can submit a 500-word or less response to: “Throughout history, theater has been used as a social voice. How does theater act as a social voice? Which voices and/or issues still need to be heard and how can theater elevate these voices/issues?” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DemocracyWorks Upload Link 	DemocracyWorks Rubric 2021
Honor Troupe (open to Thespians only)	Earn recognition for all the things you do as a Troupe! All Troupes encouraged to apply. Guidelines included in this packet. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honor Troupe Upload Link 	Honor Troupe Rubric
One-Act Festival (open to ALL!)	Submit a 5-45 minute recording of a show to be played and adjudicated during Festival <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Act Registration Link • One Act Performance Upload Link 	One Act Rubric 2021
Playworks (open to ALL!)	Students can submit finished scripts or scripts in progress for workshop and feedback from playwrights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playworks Upload Link 	---



NY Thespians Festival 2021 Pricing

(Registration closes April 6 at 11:59pm EST)



Registration - NO REFUNDS	Thespian	Non-Thespian
EARLY STUDENT REGISTRATION, Feb. 22-Mar. 16*	\$25	\$35
REGULAR STUDENT REGISTRATION, Mar. 17-Apr. 6*	\$35	\$45
TROUPE DIRECTOR or LEAD ADULT	NO COST	\$15
ADDITIONAL ADULT or ADMINISTRATOR**	\$10	\$20
THESPYS - formerly known as "Individual Events" (ONE is included in registration; students can participate in up to TWO ADDITIONAL, for a total of THREE)	\$5 each	\$5 each (however, these students are ineligible for awards)
Improv Frenzy (team of 4)	\$10	\$20
One Act Festival <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-15 minute show • 16-30 minute show • 31-45 minute show 	\$20 \$30 \$40	\$30 \$40 \$50
Playworks (must submit script by Apr. 6)	NO COST	NO COST

Changes - NO REFUNDS	Cost
February 22-April 6	\$0 per change
April 6-16	\$10 per change
April 17-April 23	CONTACT NY THESPIANS AT nythespians@gmail.com

* **NOTE:** For every TEN STUDENTS registered, receive ONE spot FREE (to be refunded or omitted from invoice)

** **NOTE:** For every adult who VOLUNTEERS to help with virtual Festival, receive one FREE student registration, up to THREE or until all volunteer slots have been filled. Volunteer registration form: <https://forms.gle/Gu6eSg81esRRxyAo9>

AMBASSADOR PROGRAM! Receive 25% off for student registration for next year's festival for each referral of a teacher who registers at least one other student (EXAMPLES: one referral = 25% off one student's registration; five referrals = 25% off five students' registrations)

NY Thespians Registration Directions 2021

(Registration closes April 6th at 11:59pm)

This year, registration is online through RegFox! That means you can log in and modify your registration at any time up until April 6th at 11:59pm. You will need to know the following to register:

PART 1: Lead Contact registration

- Troupe Director or Lead Contact information (name, pronouns, email, phone, address)
- Questions (see additional PDF files for details):
 - Will your group be submitting a one act?
 - Will your group be submitting a second one act?
 - Will your group be participating in Improv Frenzy?

PART 2: Attendees- optional (these are the additional students and adults attending)*

- Name of person (how they want to be addressed at Festival)
- Pronouns
- Email address
- Phone number (optional)
- Accommodations requested (optional)
- Thespy registration → Will this student be registering for a Thespy? (see PDF file for details- these were formerly known as Individual Events)

PART 3: Billing information

- Name
- Payment method (online or offline)
 - If paying offline with a check or money order, payment must be *received* by April 10th
 - Check/money order to be made out to “New York EdTA”
- Billing address
- Email to send invoice

***all attendees will register for workshops when the portal opens April 7th. All workshops are first come, first served until filled. All attendees will receive an email link when workshops open. If an attendee has a special assignment (One-Act Festival, Tech Challenge, Improv Frenzy, or Thespy), directions to register for those assignments will be in their initial email. Student attendees must complete a Festival Consent Form and Photo/Video release in order to attend Festival. Adult attendees must complete a Photo/Video release. Forms and releases are available through the workshop registration link.**

NOTE: Due to the virtual nature of this event, there will be NO REFUNDS issued unless the event is cancelled in its entirety. Registrations are, however, transferable until April 6th, 2021 at 11:59pm. Any changes to registrations made between April 7th and 16th, 2021 will incur a fee of \$10 per registration change.



Thespy at NY Thespian Festival 2021



Broadway has the TONYS, Hollywood has the OSCARS, Thespians have the THESPYS!

The International Thespian Excellence Awards, or Thespy™ for short, recognize the highest level of achievement in school theatre performance and technical theatre.

This educational program (formerly National Individual Events) gives Thespians — students who have been inducted into the International Thespian Society — the opportunity to receive constructive feedback on prepared theatrical material and technical designs. Students who achieve overall Superiors receive special recognition at Festival as well as a medal and certificate. All students who participate receive written feedback from three professionals in the field.

All student attendees receive one free Thespy entry! Students can opt to participate in up to two more categories for \$5 each additional submission.

Please click the links below for specific requirements and rubrics. You may also access [COMBINED THESPY REQUIREMENTS HERE](#) and [COMBINED THESPY RUBRICS HERE](#).

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL CATEGORIES

- All Thespy's will be performed or presented LIVE online, however, students will upload a recording of their submission to the Thespy Portal by April 22 JUST IN CASE there is a tech glitch the day of. Recordings will only be used if there is a poor internet connection or a major technical problem
- Wear all black
- Stick to the allocated time for the category
- Follow all category rules and expectations

PERFORMANCE THESPYS		
CATEGORY AND TOTAL TIME ALLOTTED	RULES	RUBRIC
Monologues, 3 minutes	Monologue Requirements	Acting Rubric
Duet Acting, 5 minutes	Duet/Group Acting Requirements	
Group Acting, 5 minutes		
Musical Theatre Solo, 5 minutes	Musical Solo Requirements	Musical Rubric
Musical Theatre Duet, 5 minutes	Musical Group/Duet Requirements	
Musical Theatre Group, 5 minutes		

TECHNICAL THESPYS		
8-minute presentation of portfolio*, 4 minutes of Q&A with adjudicators		
CATEGORY	REQUIREMENTS	RUBRIC
Costume Construction	Costume Construction Req.	Costume Construction Rubric
Costume Design	Costume Design Requirements	Costume Design Rubric
Light Design	Light Design Requirements, pg. 1 Light Design Requirements, pg. 2	Light Design Rubric
Makeup Design	Makeup Design Requirements	Makeup Design Rubric
Scenic (set) Design	Scenic Design Requirements	Scenic Design Rubric
Sound Design	Sound Design Req., pg. 1 Sound Design Req., pg. 2	Sound Design Rubric
Stage Management	Stage Management Req.	Stage Management Rubric
Theatre Marketing (publicity)	Theatre Marketing Req., pg. 1 Theatre Marketing Req., pg. 2	Theatre Marketing Rubric
Short Film: Film, Documentary, or Animation	Short Film Requirements	Short Film Rubric

*An exception to the 8-minute time requirement is the Short Film category. Each short film must not exceed 5 minutes, plus 1 minute for credits (total of 6 minutes). There is no portfolio of design required for this category.

If you have any questions regarding Thespys, please reach out to nythespians@gmail.com



NY Thespians One Act Festival 2021

Guidelines and Notes (DEADLINE: April 16th at 8pm)

- Dates and Times:** STREAMED Friday, April 23rd and Saturday, April 24th from 7-8:30pm; Awards Ceremony Sunday, April 25th from 3:45-5pm
- Open To:** Elementary, middle school/junior high, high school, and combined-age groups
- Awards:** Feedback given to all productions. Optional entry into competition (can select “feedback only” division); awards given for Overall Superior, Audience Choice, and Superior Student-Written Script, Actor, Supporting Actor, Crew, and Company/Ensemble
- Tickets:** Livestream codes will be made available to friends and family two weeks before the event. Tickets are \$5 each; all proceeds benefit NY Thespians. Livestream code includes Awards Ceremony.
- Rubric:** [Adjudication rubric link here](#)

School/theatrical groups can submit up to **two** one acts to the festival. **Up to 15 students** involved in each production are included in a school’s registration. See below for costs of additional students.

Props, costumes, set pieces, and digital backgrounds are allowed, though performances will not receive extra points for utilizing those items. Time begins from curtain up. Title and credits do not count in the total time.

Length of Performances Accepted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 minutes - 45 minutes
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Categories of Entry	1) SCRIPT and DIRECTION	2) TYPE
	● Student written and produced	Play (non-musical)
	● Student written, teacher/adult directed	Musical
	● Published script, student directed	Play with music
	● Published script, teacher/adult directed	

Entry Fee Structure (per one-act; ex. If you are a Thespians Troupe submitting one show that is 12 minutes and another show that is 30 minutes, the entry fee is \$20 + \$30 = \$50 total)	Length of Performance (does not include set-up and strike time)	Entry Fee, Thespians Troupe	Entry Fee, non-Thespians school
	5-15 minutes	\$20	\$30
	16-30 minutes	\$30	\$40
	31-45 minutes	\$40	\$50

Additional Costs	Type	Fee
	Additional Thespians performer/supporter	\$5 each
	Additional non-Thespians performer/supporter	\$7 each

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION:

- Submit a link OR copy via WeTransfer to nythespians@gmail.com by 8pm Friday, April 16th
- All participants must be NON-UNION
- No nudity
- No live smoking; theatrical cigarettes are permitted
- No live candles, lighters, or other flames unless supervised by an adult
- No live pyrotechnics
- No firing of guns - all gun sounds or explosions need to be done by sound cue

TECHNICAL GUIDELINES:

- All schools/theatrical groups are responsible for securing both performance and streaming rights for each production unless the show is student written or falls under the public domain
- All shows must be eligible to stream through BookTix
- Keep it SIMPLE - the One Act Festival is about celebrating student work; no additional points will be awarded due to access to specialized equipment or programs (example: green screens or OBS)
- NOTE: this is a festival of theater, not film! Theatrical conventions apply.



New York Thespians Honor Troupe Process



New York Thespians strive to excel both on stage and off. The New York Thespians would like to recognize those troupes who achieve a high level of excellence by sponsoring the New York Thespians Honor Troupe. This achievement is meant for those troupes who do tremendous work in their school and community and should be recognized. There is no limit to the number who can apply or be recognized each year. The application process will include the following:

- ★ Creating a portfolio, slide show, or “brag book” about the positive impact your troupe made throughout the previous year. **An Honor Troupe year begins the first day of Festival and ends when the following year’s Festival commences.** All directions must be followed exactly with no duplicates in multiple categories. The portfolio may be created by student leaders.
- ★ Submit the Honor Troupe application by email to kristiefarr@ircsd.org. Save the document as a PDF before sending (for your safekeeping).
- ★ Make a hard copy of your application to be given to the judges for reference throughout the judging process. Bring the copies to the Leadership Conference with your presentation.
- ★ Present the troupe’s portfolio at the New York State Thespians Festival. One or two student leaders will make a presentation not to exceed ten minutes in length to the Honor Troupe adjudicators.

Awards will be presented at the New York Thespians State Conference in April. A framed certificate will be given to each school that earns a Bronze or Silver ranking, and a plaque will be ordered for those who attain a Gold ranking. In addition, each school will receive a letter addressed to their principal celebrating their achievement.

Please, organize your portfolio in the following categories: **Theatre Production, Participation, Theatre Outreach, and Community Service.** If helpful, you may include a Table of Contents organized by date, if that is helpful for your troupe (or Historian). You may include more than one artifact for an event. For example, you may include photos, tickets, programs, and posters.

Schools may earn between zero and the maximum total points possible in any category. Points totalling over 100 will only be considered if all maximum point totals were met in all four categories. It is not necessary to perform in all categories for a level lower than Gold.

Theatre Production (35 Points)

Evidence is necessary for all items referenced on the rubric. Evidence may include programs, posters, tickets, renderings, photos, design process, rehearsal calendar, etc.

- ★ Full-length Production (10 points; Student Directed +1, Student Written +1, Devised +2)
- ★ One Act Production (Approx. 15-60 min. 4 points; Student Directed +1, Student Written +1, Devised +2)
- ★ Class Project with Public Performance (2 points; Student Directed +1)
- ★ Variety Showcase (3 points)
- ★ Improvisation Performance (3 points)
- ★ Coffee House/Open Mic (2 points)
- ★ Student Designed Technical Element (3 points)
- ★ Hosting a Talent Show/Cabaret or over 5 Thespians in a Talent Show/Cabaret (3 points)
- ★ New Innovative Project (5 points)
- ★ Other Production (2-5 points)

Participation (35 Points)

Evidence is necessary for all items referenced on the rubric. Evidence may include programs, posters, tickets, registrations, photos, letters from organization, etc.

- ★ Thespian Troupe Field trip (3 points)
- ★ Thespian Troupe Workshop with Guest Artist (2 points)
- ★ Thespian Troupe Planned Activity (2 points)
- ★ Attendance at Regional Festival (5 points; Non-individual competitions,+1)
- ★ Attendance at a State Festival (5 points; Non-individual competitions,+1)
- ★ Attendance at a National Theatre Festival (5 points; Non-individual competitions,+1)
- ★ Attendance at International Thespian Festival (5 points; Non-individual competitions,+1)
- ★ Hosting a Regional or State Thespian Competition (5 points)
- ★ Participation in All-State Performance (5 points)
- ★ Thespys (5 points max., 1 point per student)
- ★ State Thespian Officer (5 points per officer, max. 2 per school)
- ★ International Thespian Officer (10 points)
- ★ Tech Challenge Team (3 points)
- ★ Play Works Entry (up to 3 points: 1 point per entry, 2 points if chosen)
- ★ New Innovative Participation Project (2-5 points)
- ★ Fundraiser - for Troupe, NY Thespians, or a cause (1-5 points; Describe project, amount raised, and number of participants)
- ★ Student-led Workshops: (examples: auditioning process, lighting/sound training, 2 points)
- ★ Thespian Troupe workshop with guest artist (1-2 points)
- ★ Adoption of non-Thespians, mentoring non-Thespians (up to 3 points)
- ★ Successful Grant (1-2 points)
- ★ Thespian Troupe fundraiser for the Theatre department (1-2 points)
- ★ Thespian Troupe planned activity (department picnic, welcoming activity, 2 points))

To earn more points, defend within description why your project deserves special consideration or a higher point value. It is important that a defense is made in writing rather than only verbally in presentation as the judging process is dependent upon evidence included in your hard copies left with the judges.

Theatre Outreach (10 Points)

Evidence is necessary for all items referenced on the rubric. Evidence may include programs, posters, tickets, registrations, photos, letters from organization, newspaper articles, etc.

- ★ Tour a Production to Community or Different School (3 points)
- ★ Host a production for another school (your troupe is performing or you are sharing the space if this is not a regular occurrence) (1-2 points)
- ★ Cross Curriculum Support (5 points)
- ★ Developing issued-based activities for your community that directly relate to the production (3-4 points)
- ★ Social Media presence/department website (1-3 points)
- ★ Troupe Attends Another Official Thespian Troupe Production, 5+ Thespians (3 points)
- ★ STO attends Official Thespian Troupe Production (2 points)
- ★ Innovative Theatre Project Brought to Community (5 points)
- ★ High School Production Incorporates Elementary and/or Middle School Students OR high school students participate in elementary/middle school productions (3-5 points)
- ★ Combined Troupe Activity (2-5 points)
- ★ Junior Thespian Troupe Sponsor (5 points)
- ★ Theatre in Our Schools Month Activity (1-5 points)
- ★ Hosting a professional touring group (1-5 points)
- ★ Works tech for another department or club event - 5+ Thespians unpaid (1-5 points)

Community Service (10 Points)

Evidence is necessary for all items referenced on the rubric. Evidence may include photos, letters from organization, newspaper articles, written description of the event, etc. (1-5 points for each - a few examples below)

- ★ Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS Fundraising
- ★ Leading a Community Service Effort
- ★ Participating in School Improvement Project, 5+ Thespians
- ★ Other Service Projects Unique to School or Community

Thespian Standards (Not included in the 100 point total)

In order to be considered for Honor Troupe status, Troupes must meet EdTA active troupe guidelines including the following:

- ★ Official Thespian Inductions held this year can be proven with pictures & receipt from EdTA.
- ★ Clear Thespian Point System can be proven with a copy of points sheet used for troupe.
- ★ Regular meetings can be proven with attendance records or attendance sheets.
- ★ Pay EdTA Renewal Dues/Membership Fee can be proven with a receipt from EdTA.
- ★ Attended New York Thespian State Conference can be proven with a receipt and/or photos.

Gold: 90-100

Silver: 80-89

Bronze: 70-79

Note: New York Thespians wish to hear from all Troupes! Even if you do not meet all criteria, we encourage you to present your troupe's successes for consideration in the Honor Troupe process.

If you have any questions about the Honor Troupe process, please, contact Kristie L. Fuller, Honor Troupe Coordinator at kristiefuller@ircsd.org.

Developed by researching Honor Troupe documents/information from Indiana Thespians, Washington State Thespians, Kansas Thespians, Arizona Thespians, Colorado Thespians



NY State Thespian Festival Improv Frenzy 2021

as developed by Improv Artist Joy Weir



The basic skills of improvisation do not necessarily result in comedy.

Students will be judged on their mastery of improvisational skills,
not the level of comedy achieved in each scene.

Improv Teams: Schools may enter up to four students as their Improv Team, however, students will perform in pairs. In teams of three, one student may perform twice.

Adjudication Criteria:

- Listening
- Three Improv Essentials
- Forwarding
- Plot Progression

(See below for a more detailed description of each element listed.)

Rules:

- Students will be given a total of 5 minutes and 30 seconds for their scene.
 - The time begins once the students draw their improv essential.
 - Students will have up to 30 seconds to set their scene and can use up to four chairs. This time is to be used to move chairs and create their playing space. Students are not permitted to talk about or plan their scenes in any way.
 - After 30 seconds, the adjudicator will notify the students and they must begin their slate.
 - After the scene is set, students will slate their performance with their names and school information.
 - Students may use all of the remaining time to complete their scene.
 - There is no time minimum, however it is suggested that students aim to use at least 3 minutes of their scene time. This is merely a suggestion for practice.
- Students will draw one of the three improv essentials from a predetermined list to inspire their scene.
- Students who go over their allotted 5 minutes and 30 second time will be disqualified.
 - Students may request that an adjudicator give them an indication of 1 minute remaining.

Adjudication Criteria Further Detailed:

In describing the adjudication elements, we will use an example of an improvisation performed by Student X and Student Y in which one student is asking the other to a school dance.

Listening (4 points):

Listening is essential in improvisation.

Students should be listening and reacting appropriately to the **offers** given by their scene partner. **Offers** are the new information given by an actor.

One **offer** provided may be student X telling student Y,

“I was asked to the dance by James.”

This is essential new information for student Y.

They now know that they must convince student X to forego the other date.

An example of poor **listening** skills would be for Student Y to miss this new information by saying:

“I know you don’t have a date yet, so you should just go with me.”

Three Improv Essentials (4 points):

This is the **“Who”**, **“What”**, and **“Where”**.

These are three questions that must be answered in the beginning of a scene in order to establish the world of the scene.

Each pair will draw one of these elements to inspire their scene.

The **“Who”** refers to the relationship between characters. Students should quickly indicate who their characters are to each other. It is a best practice that characters know each other and are not strangers.

This can be achieved by referring to one another with a **explicit cue**;

“Student X, I am glad we’re classmates this year”

Or this can be deduced through listening and **conversational cues**;

“Student X, wasn’t Mrs. Dempsey’s test hard on Friday?”

Both of these cues establish that the characters are classmates. **Conversational cues** are typically an example of a further mastery of this skill.

The **“What”** refers to what the students are currently doing. Any activity can be a “What”, from packing up their books at their locker to checking their Instagram feed. A best practice is to choose an active “What” that requires movement.

“What”s can be explicitly stated,

“Hey, are you getting your gym bag?”

Or **“What”**s can be indicated through movement. This will require miming objects in the room.

Students will **not be judged on their execution of miming the activity**, however if the “What” is not clear through observation of the miming activity, it may result in a lower score.

“Where” refers to the location in which the scene takes place.

“Where”s can be stated with **explicit clues**,

“I’m glad you were in the hallway!”

Or **“Where”**s can be implied through **conversational cues**,

“Do you want to walk to Mrs. Dempsey’s class with me?”

Both of these cues establish that the characters are in the hallway. **Conversational cues** are typically an example of a further mastery of this skill.

SAMPLE EXERCISE TO LEARN THE THREE IMPROV ESSENTIALS:

Have your students begin an improv. They will have 3 lines to establish the who, what, and where. The goal is for the lines to make sense together. Encourage them to use explicit cues at first. After they deliver their three lines, ask them to reflect on how else they may have been able to establish these three essentials in more conversational ways.

Have the students replay the same scene with 5 lines. Gradually give them more lines to work with until they have found ways to incorporate some of the conversational cues they reflected on.

Forwarding (4 points):

This is sometimes referred to as “**Yes, And**”.

Forwarding refers to moving a scene forward during an improvisation. Good improvisers use **offers** to progress the plot of a scene.

The “**Yes**” portion refers to taking in new information as fact. Good improvisers **never negate** new information.

An example of “**Yes**”ing the offer provided by Student X is Student Y saying,
“I never knew James liked you.”

An example of **negating** the offer provided by Student X is Student Y saying,
“James would never ask you to the dance.”

The “**And**” portion refers to giving a scene partner a new offer, adding to the established world of the scene and progressing the plot.

An example of “**And**”ing would Student Y saying,
“I wanted to go to the dance with you.”

Now both Student X & Student Y understand where the scene is going.

An example of keeping the scene **stagnant** and not forwarding the action would be Student Y saying,

“Cool. What are you wearing?”

This doesn’t give either scene partner any new information about where the scene is going in terms of plot progression.

Plot Progression (4 points):

Every successful improvisational scene has a **beginning, middle, and end.**

The **beginning** of a scene should last about 45 second to 1 minute. The beginning should establish the three improv essentials and set us up for the middle of the scene.

The **middle** of a scene should last about 1 to 2 minutes. The middle consists of two important elements; **rising action** and **conflict.**

Rising action is the portion of the scene where tension rises and the audience receives hints about what the conflict is.

Using our example, **rising action** may be Student Y mentioning they don't have a date yet. They might talk about how they wish they could just go with a friend instead of asking someone they don't know very well. This gives the audience a hint that Student Y wants to ask Student X to the dance.

Conflict is just two opposing forces in a scene. It does not necessarily mean an argument or fight. The goal is to give the audience someone to root for or relate to.

The forces can be **external** to the scene partners relationship, such as Student X wants to go with James. Or the forces can be **internal**, such as Student X doesn't want jeopardize their friendship with Student Y.

Both of these conflicts are acceptable, however when using **external** forces involving a character outside of the scene remember it is essential that the scene remains about the characters in it. Though Student Y wants to go with James, the actors should focus on the reasons why Student Y doesn't want to go with Student X.

The **end** of a scene should last about 1 to 1.5 minutes. The **end** should include a **resolution** to the conflict established in the middle of the scene.

The **resolution** should show or tell the audience where the characters in the scene will go from here.

Execution (4 points):

This is the overall execution of the scene. Scene partners establish concentration and commitment to moment-to-moment choices; integration of voice, body, and emotions create a believable character/relationship that tells a story.

Final Scoring:

A school/organization's final score is determined by the average score of both teams by all adjudicators. All participants will receive written feedback.