



Izzy Gesell  
Head Honcho

P.O. Box 962 ~ Northampton, MA 01061  
Phone: 413-586-2634 ~ Fax: 413-585-0407  
[izzy@izzyg.com](mailto:izzy@izzyg.com) [www.izzyg.com](http://www.izzyg.com)

Member: National Speakers Association  
CSP (Certified Speaking Professional)



"Playing Along: 37 Group Learning Activities  
Borrowed from Improvisational Theater"  
I S B N 1-57025-141-X

## **"YES AND..."**

Participants learn the importance of agreement and improve their listening skills through the use of role playing

### GOALS

To foster cooperation

To improve interpersonal relationships and listening skills

To demonstrate the basic improv principal that "agreement is the one rule that can never be broken."

### GROUP SIZE

2 players per scene

### TIME

3-5 minutes per scene

### PROCESS

- Introduce the structure as a game in which each player must agree with the others no matter what is said.
  
- Present the following example:
  - Player 1 should start a conversation with a positive, declarative statement.
  - Player 2 agrees with Player 1 by first saying "Yes and...," then making her own declarative statement. Thus, after responding positively, you carry the conversation and the story forward by adding to the information.

---

Helping Speakers, Trainers, Facilitators, and anyone who stands up in front of an audience become more confident, spontaneous, and effective.

WHERE ARE YOU STUCK?

- If Player 1 says, "Let's go to the movies," Player 2 might answer "Yes, and let's sneak some popcorn into the theater." Player 1 says "Yes, and I'll put the butter in my pocket." Player 2 responds, "Yes, and I'll talk loudly when the popcorn begins to pop." This format allows the conversation to continue and develop in interesting ways.
- "Yes but..." or even answering "yes" without the "and" is not enough. "Yes and..." plus another declarative sentence opens the scene to unlimited possibilities.
- Bring two volunteers to the stage in front of the audience.
- Ask the audience to propose a situation in which a group of people might find themselves and to identify the relationship of those people to each other. For example: workers and boss trapped in an elevator, family picnic, strangers sitting next to each other at a ball game. After the situation and the identities of the players have been determined, ask Player 1 to begin with a declarative sentence, keeping in mind the relationship he has to the other players and the situation he is in.
- Continue the role play until it comes to a natural stopping point or until a predetermined time has been reached.
- Conclude the activity with the following questions:
  - What are the obstacles to agreement?
  - How does it feel to be consistently agreed with?
  - How can this technique be helpful to you in your dealings with others?