

WHAT'S SO FUNNY (LEVEL 3)

Description	Over the course of a week, learners will practice with key drama exercises to become actors and actresses while they learn about the basic concepts of drama as a genre.
Leading Question	How can you make someone laugh?
Total Time Required	5 hours over 5 days
Supplies Required	Pencil and Paper
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning different types of humor - Understanding the purpose of comedy and laughter - Observing the characteristics of language and literacy that make things funny

DAY 1

Today you will explore the concept of humor!

Suggested Duration	Activity and Description
5 minutes	<p>Let's start exploring the concept of humor with a big laugh – let's think of the funniest thing you remember and laugh out loudly (Tip: Do not suppress or reduce your laugh)</p> <p>Explore the question: "What makes us laugh and why is it so important?"</p>
10 minutes	<p>Draw and annotate ideas or words web for everything connected to the concept of "How do we make someone laugh?"</p> <p>Write the ideas or words down to create this web. Think of why, when, and how we laugh, the different types of laughter, and what laughter is - some of the prompts for this exercise can be found below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What emotions do you associate with laughter? E.g. joy, happiness etc. - When were the last 3 times you laughed out loud? E.g. when my brother fell for a prank

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are some ways to make someone laugh? E.g. tell a joke, giggle etc. - What are types of laughter? E.g. giggle, chortle, cackle etc. - How would you define laughter (try observing people who are laughing)? E.g. a rhythmic and audible noise that comes when people find things funny etc. <p>How can we put all these ideas together to develop a comedy show to make our friends and family laugh?</p>
<p>5 minutes</p>	<p>Let's start with exploring jokes, riddles and puns. Try to define these concepts without looking at the answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a joke? Answer: Something that causes amusement and often has a punchline. A punchline is the final part of the joke that is usually clever and intended to make the audience laugh. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Do you know a joke and can you share it? What do you think makes it funny and makes people laugh? - What is a riddle? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Answer: A brain teaser that is often phrased in a way that makes it puzzling or misleading and difficult to solve. What do you think makes this fun? - What is a pun? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Answer: Do you know a pun that you can share? A pun involves wordplay where a similar word has multiple meanings. What makes a pun funny?
<p>5 minutes</p>	<p>Listen to a few examples and write down which jokes and puns you enjoyed the most and also what are the characteristics that make them funny?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What's the best part about living in Switzerland? Answer: Not sure, but the flag is a big plus. Hint: This is funny, because the phrase "a big plus" has two meanings – one literal and another not so literal. Switzerland's flag has a plus sign on it. Also, "a big plus" is a phrase that means a big advantage or positive thing. In this joke, the same word is used to mean different things. This is called wordplay – the learning from this joke is that when something is surprising and unexpected – it is often funny! 2. What is a mouse's favorite game? Answer: Hide and Squeak Hint: This is funny because the game is Hide and Seek, and the sound made by mice is called a squeak. This word rhymes with and is similar in pronunciation to the word seek - similar sounding words also make things really funny 3. The sign in a tailor's shop reads, "Please have a fit upstairs,"

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	<p>Hint: This is funny because in this pun, there is a play on the word “fit”, which can mean the fitting of clothes and / or when people “have a fit” or display anger or shock – this is a pun where the same word means different things</p> <p>4. My new hobby is eating clocks. It’s rather time-consuming. Hint: This is funny because time-consuming is used to mean two things – an activity that takes a lot of time and eating (consuming) time</p> <p>5. Why do fish swim in saltwater? Because pepper makes them sneeze Hint: This is funny because salt and pepper are usually offered together and pepper makes human beings sneeze.</p> <p>Rate these jokes in terms of which one you find funniest and write down the characteristics that made these funny e.g. the element of surprise, the wordplay etc.</p>
<p>10 minutes</p>	<p>Consider these characteristics to write 2 – 3 of your own jokes and puns – remember when thinking of puns to think of words that mean multiple different things 😊</p>
<p>20 minutes</p>	<p>Let’s now explore some riddles:</p> <p>Riddle is a question that is worded in a way that makes it difficult to find the answer.</p> <p>Simple riddles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What goes up and does not come down? Answer: Your age 2. Riddle: What has to be broken before you can use it? Answer: An egg 3. Riddle: I’m tall when I’m young, and I’m short when I’m old. What am I? Answer: A candle <p>Reflect on the examples above – are there some similar characteristics?</p> <p>Hint: They are all descriptive and often personify objects as people such as the last one about the candle. Personification is when human qualities are given to non-human things.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. What month of the year has 28 days? Answer: All of them 5. What is full of holes but still holds water? Answer: A sponge 6. What question can you never answer yes to? Answer: Are you asleep yet?

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	<p>What additional characteristics of a riddle did you observe from these examples? Hint: The way they are written is often tricky or misleading i.e. it makes you assume that something with holes will not be able to hold water or that only February has 28 days...</p> <p>7. Feed me and I live, Give me a drink and I die, What am I? Answer: A fire</p> <p>8. Whoever makes it, tells it not Whoever takes it, knows it not Whoever knows it, wants it not What is it: Answer: Coffin Box</p> <p>What other characteristics do you observe from the more detailed riddles above? Hint: Most of them rely on imagery and personification, and often are told from the perspective of the object or answer</p> <p>Write down your own one or two riddles remembering the characteristics they thought about and learned when reading the examples above, answer the questions below when developing the riddle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start with writing a clear and concrete answer - Think about 2- 3 synonyms (synonyms are words or phrases that mean the same thing) - Think carefully about the chosen object as an answer, what are its characteristics? Please write anything that comes to mind (words or phrases etc.) - What can you compare the object and its characteristics to? Can you think of multiple points of comparison? - Can you think about the contradictions in the comparison or describe the object as a person? - If you were the object or person, what would its point of view be? <p>Use figurative language that means language that goes beyond the obvious and literal meaning of the words e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "I am a passport to adventure." Answer: A book (this is a metaphor that compares two very different things that have something in common. Both books and passports can lead to some kind of adventure, although of different types) - "I reflect like a mirror." Answer: water (this is a simile that
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	<p>compares something to another using the word like or as to compare)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “We buzz, buzz, buzz.” Answer: bees (this uses an onomatopoeia, which is when a word is created from the sound of something. The word “buzz” is also the sound bees make) <p>Share the riddles and puns / jokes that you have developed with your friends / family members to see which ones get the most laughs - based on this real life feedback, edit and improve them to keep ready for your comedy show.</p>
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DAY 2

Today you will explore the concept of slapstick humor today.

Suggested Duration	Activity and Description
5 minutes	<p>Today you will explore the concept of slapstick humor.</p> <p>Think back to a time when you had a laugh out loud moment because you watched something funny. For example, someone slipped on a banana peel or fell down because the chair behind them was pulled etc.</p> <p>Re-tell one such funny story.</p> <p>This kind of humor is called slapstick. It usually involved exaggerated physical activities.</p>
15 minutes	<p>Do a small poll asking at least 5 family members / classmates for one such funny story each and then identify and write down 2-3 commonalities e.g. Absurd situations, very vigorous, uninhibited actions, crude practical jokes etc.</p> <p>To confirm and discover additional characteristics, act out some of the slapstick situations shared above.</p>
15 minutes	<p>One important characteristic of slapstick is timing: Act out one of the funny stories to see this e.g. The chair has to be pulled unknowingly just when the other actor is about to sit – if the chair was pulled before, the actor would have seen it and not tried to sit etc.</p> <p>The second important characteristic of slapstick is that it is very boisterous and physical – usually because it is not accompanied by any voice or sound as this style of comedy was used in silent movies that did</p>

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	<p>not use sound.</p> <p>How would slapstick comedy change if the actors could speak? E.g. when the chair was moved actor 1 could warn actor 2 who was going to sit down. This also implies that the facial actions and bodily movements have to be a lot more pronounced and exaggerated to make a point.</p> <p>The third important characteristic is that something always goes wrong and someone gets hurt! This is what introduces the element of surprise to make this funny – if actor 2 did not fall down when actor 1 pulled the chair, it would not be funny.</p> <p>Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pie in the face - Slipping on or tripping over something (like a banana peel, for instance...) - Accidentally walking into a wall - Pratfall (that is, falling and landing on your bottom!)
<p>20 minutes</p>	<p>Write your own slapstick comedy skit keeping in mind the characteristics you have identified.</p> <p>Act out your comedy skit, did the audience burst out laughing – this is considered spontaneous laughter and is the most genuine form of laughter.</p> <p>Consider the impact of this slapstick on others – are people laughing at the actor who gets hurt? Reflect or remember a time when something that hurt someone made them laugh – how do you think this made that person feel? Why do you think everyone laughed?</p> <p>Hint: Laughter is a social form of communication and the sinister aspect of laughter is to form groups and cohesion, which excludes some people to bring everyone else closer.</p> <p>Adapt your slapstick routine to ensure that it is not hurting other people's sentiments and keep it ready to include into your comedy routine.</p>

DAY 3

Today you explore the concept of ridiculous or surreal humor.

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Suggested Duration	Activity and Description
<p>10 minutes</p>	<p>Today you'll explore the concept of ridiculous or surreal humor which focuses on the absurdity of a situation – since it is totally unpredictable, it is usually unexpected and makes you laugh!</p>  <p>LUCK is...</p>  <p>...a word that we use often</p> <p>Observe the two pictures above, and think about what made you laugh or entertained them about it.</p>
<p>10 minutes</p>	<p>Draw a surreal picture based on an everyday object, remember to tick off the checklist to make sure it's: 1) distorting reality e.g. expand the</p>

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	<p>head of the object or elongate it etc., 2) is absurd or ridiculous e.g. hands coming out of shoes etc., 3) is totally unpredictable e.g. something no one would guess.</p>
<p>30 minutes</p>	<p>You will now write a lyrical nonsense poem, such as the one below by Lewis Carroll:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Walrus and the Carpenter We're walking close at hand; They wept like anything to see Such quantities of sand: 'If this were only cleared away,' They said, 'it would be grand!'</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">'If seven maids with seven mops Swept it for half a year, Do you suppose,' the Walrus said, 'That they could get it clear?' 'I doubt it,' said the Carpenter, And shed a bitter tear ...</p> <p>You need to make sure that they do not make sense:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think of a core idea or theme of the poem: e.g. A wedding - Think of all the associated ridiculous ideas e.g. a wedding in a tent with grass as an audience etc. - Write contradictory ideas e.g. a scarecrow and a bird getting married - since birds are usually scared of scarecrows - Write made-up words e.g. baloohey to help the rhyme scheme and continue a theme of things they have made up - Use language in random ways. - Exaggerate by using words that illustrate the emotions and action in a dramatic and ridiculous way. You can use funny words - Think of a surprise ending, <p>Choose to use some or all of the above ideas and write a 6 line lyrical nonsense poem – you can choose to make it rhyme.</p> <p>Does this poem feel silly? The simplest form of surreal humor is silliness – kids are often very silly, but we lose this as we grow older – let's explore why this spontaneous laughter is so important.</p> <p>Let's make some silly faces at each other and then laugh out loud – carefully observe what happens to you or your body when you laugh.</p>

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	<p>Remember to : 1) hug yourself, 2) observe your breath after a good laugh, 3) check your pulse before and after laughing by placing your fingers on your wrist and count the number of pulse beats per 30 seconds, 4) check what happens to your face and body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write down 3 – 4 physically observable changes that happen due to laughter - Compare these changes to a workout or exercise. Are you similarly out of breath and have an elevated pulse and do your muscles hurt sometimes? - Check the effects of this laughter on your mood. Does it make you feel more stress-free and relaxed? - Check the impact of laughter on any pain you are experiencing? Do you forget, does this help you get distracted, does this numb the pain? <p>Edit your drawings and poems working hard to make these funnier given the importance of laughter.</p>
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DAY 4

Today you will work on a funny short story that is related to your own life.

Suggested Duration	Activity and Description
15 minutes	<p>Ask your friends / families to share stories about people in your family or schools etc. Sometimes, the things that we find funny do not get a reaction from other people. Why do you think that is the case?</p> <p>This is called observational humor that people find funny because it is about real life and stories from your own life that make people laugh because they relate to the context. Other people who have not experienced these situations may not find jokes related to these funny</p> <p>Another type of humor is dark humor which discusses even more sensitive issues that cause people to feel slightly uncomfortable. Have you ever found people laughing inappropriately at a painful, fearful or uncomfortable situation?</p>
5 minutes	<p>Think of a topic that is related to your school or homes / families and something that you find funny about this.</p>

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10 minutes	Write a funny story based on this topic – you can recall something that was embarrassing and strange to you or make up an incident.
20 minutes	<p>Now edit this story with different types of irony, which is when the outcome of a situation is contradictory and unexpected and has a humorous effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First edit your story to add situational irony – something happening that is very different to what was expected e.g. running away from a water gun, we fell into the lake or the fire station that burns down - Next edit the story to add dramatic irony – something that the audience can see, but the actor in the story cannot see e.g. the actor thinks no one remembers your birthday, but there is a surprise party and everyone is hidden that the audience know about - Next edit the story to add verbal irony – using the contradictory words that are sarcastic in nature e.g. ‘I guess, it’s my lucky day’ - when something terrible happens. Sarcasm is when irony is used to mock a certain situation <p>Tell this story to your family / friends and laugh with them – how does this make them feel about your embarrassment? Does it help release the tension and make the memory funny? Laughing at your own stories will make them less painful 😊</p>

DAY 5

Today you will put together your different acts and show you family and friends.

Suggested Duration	Activity and Description
40 minutes	<p>On the final day, put together your 4 different acts as a comedy show for your friends in school or family at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jokes, riddles and puns - Lyrical nonsense poem - Slapstick - Ironic short story <p>Try to connect the 4 acts of the show by thinking of how we can use repetition as a tool to connect some of the funny punchlines from each of the different acts of the show e.g. repeat the “hide and squeak”</p>

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	<p>punchline from the poem you created on day 1 or in the short story.</p> <p>Remember to hold a straight face and not laugh out loud before the punchline to make sure you do not give away the unexpected.</p> <p>Ensure there are multiple pauses to create a build-up with the audience so they are looking forward to the punchline or the point of the comedy.</p> <p>Finally, practice the comedy show with a small audience and make changes based on how to make this funnier.</p> <p>You will discover that another important facet of laughter that it can create positive feelings in other people and a sense of group unity – so when you laugh, people around you start laughing because it is contagious</p> <p>Create your own “laugh track”, i.e. recorded sounds of laughter usually played in the background in comedy shows and jokes that make the audience laugh harder when they hear it. If you do not have access to a recording device, you can ask a family member / friend to laugh hard at each of the jokes!</p> <p>Perform your comedy shows and reflect on what you enjoyed the most with the project and what you found the most funny.</p> <p>End your project with a big smile – realizing that even a fake smile will help you uplift your mood!</p>
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ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- Coherence of the poems and short story
- Word choice and understanding of language for puns etc.
- Use of figurative language,
- Understanding of different types of humor
- Correct usage of the different figures of speech

ADDITIONAL ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

- Learners can develop their own comedy skit consisting of a series of related events that are funny and entertaining. They can incorporate the different types of humor – irony, slapstick and puns to tell a coherent story with an unexpected ending or twist

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MODIFICATIONS FOR SIMPLIFICATION

- Reduce the activities from one or more days

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