One-line Improv - Throw the Ball[[1]](#footnote-0)

Tags: speaking, movement, listening, improv, warm-up

Type: Whole class

Time: 5 - 10 minutes

## **Why are we doing this?**

This exercise is excellent to wake up both body and mind. The students get a chance to use their creativity and imagination to come up with new formations for the ball. They train their listening skills by reacting to the object they were thrown and use their voice and body to communicate what their ball turns into.

## **What materials/set-up do I need to prepare?**

You do not need any materials but you will need some space. I recommend having everyone stand up and form a circle.

## **How do we do this?**

Present the class with an imaginary ball. I recommend taking the imaginary ball out of a bag or a drawer. Hold it in your hands as if it were a real ball indicating its weight and its dimensions with your hands. You can, for example, pretend it is a basketball and mime dribbling it on the floor or a glass ball and handle it very carefully.

Explain to the students that you have acquired a magic ball that transforms whenever it is given to another person. However, since the ball is invisible and only the current handler of the ball can see it, they will have to mime to the whole class what the ball has transformed into and say a sentence that relates to said object. They then have to throw their item to the next person who must react to that object being thrown at them.

**For example:**

The ball has previously turned into a toothbrush and the person said “My dentist won’t find any cavities next time” and then when they threw it the next person flinched away because someone just threw a toothbrush at them.

 The next person let the toothbrush fall to the floor and there it transformed into a soccer ball. They said “Ronaldo is nothing compared to me” and then they kicked it to the next person who caught it with an “oomph”

 The third person then felt the ball change into a giant machine that churns out kittens. “Oh no, my kitten making machine is going into overdrive” they said as they picked up an armful of kittens and threw them at the next person with a screeching “Meow!”

Hand your ball to the person next to you. If you have decided your ball is made of glass then hand it carefully over saying something like “please be careful with this, they’ll fire me if I break this.”

## **Alternative methods:**

This exercise can also be done using props. A long piece of cloth, a stick or a frisbee can be used if the imaginary ball is too intimidating. A broomstick handle can turn into a wizard’s wand (“You shall not pass!”), a vacuum (“I’d better clean this up before my mom gets home”), a fishing pole (“nothing’s biting today”) or a metal detector (“I’ve only found three paperclips and a rusty nail so far”)

1. **Source:** Fennessey, S. (2006). Using Theater Games to Enhance Language Arts Learning. *The Reading Teacher*, *59*(7), 688–691. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20204404 [↑](#footnote-ref-0)