Thought-tracking[[1]](#footnote-0)

Tags: speaking, reflection, improv, listening, short exercise

Type: Whole class

Time: 10-15 minutes

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

We are doing this exercise to delve deeper into the material and figure out our character’s inner thoughts and feelings. We are reflecting and analysing the scene in-role. Having the action of the scene slowed down can help students understand the underlying meanings or actions and their characters motivations.

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

You will need to use a part of the classroom as a stage for the students to perform.

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

Thought-tracking is an excellent exercise to do in the middle of another improvisational exercise such as “Still Images” or “Ten Line Scene” to reveal publicly the private thoughts of characters at a specific moment in the action.

There are several ways to implement thought-tracking into various exercises.

* In the middle of a scene or a still image, walk into the scene and tap a character or the shoulder. Have them speak out loud about the inner thoughts and feelings of their character.
* In the middle of a scene, have the players freeze in place and have the rest of the class stand behind a certain character, one at a time, and speak aloud what they think is going on in that character’s mind.
* Have half the class mime something and the other half describe what the characters must be feeling at that moment. For example: half the class mimes evacuees packing their bags in preparation for leaving a disaster, and the other half reflects out loud what the characters must be feeling and thinking in that exact moment. Are they scared? Do they have everything they need? Does a teddy bear count as a necessary item? Etc.
* Tap two characters at once and let them have a secret conversation in front of the other frozen characters to express their feelings about what is happening in a scene.

1. **Source:** Neelands, J., & Goode, T. (2015). *Structuring drama work*. Cambridge University Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)