

### ADG 30 IMPROVISATION: SHMOO AND AARDVARK INSTRUCTIONS

Sit the students in a circle.

Have two different objects in your hands i.e., a pencil and a roll of tape.

#### ROUND 1

Pass one of the objects to the right. This object is a "Shmoo." As the starter of the game, you are "Giver A." When you hand the object to the student on the right, they are "The Receiver." The two of you speak the following dialogue.

**GIVER A:** This is a shmoo.

**RECEIVER:** A what?

**GIVER A:** A shmoo.

**RECEIVER:** Oh, a shmoo! *Receiver takes the object and turns to her right.*

#### ROUND 2

The Receiver now becomes GIVER B. She turns to her right and gives the object to the new receiver on her right. They engage in the same dialogue with the following variation:

**GIVER B:** This is a shmoo.

**RECEIVER:** A what?

**GIVER B** (*turns back to GIVER A*): A what?

**GIVER A** (*to Giver B*): A shmoo.

**GIVER B** (*to RECEIVER*): A shmoo.

**RECEIVER:** Oh! A shmoo!

#### ROUND 3 AND ON

The pattern continues down the line:

**GIVER F:** This is a shmoo.

**REVEIVER:** A what?

**GIVER F** (*Turns to Giver E*): A what?

**GIVER E** (*Turns to Giver D*): A what?

**GIVER D:** A what?

**GIVER C:** A what?

Etc.

**GIVER A** (*Answers Giver B*): A shmoo.

**GIVER B:** A shmoo.

Etc. and the word is passed along like Broken Telephone until it gets back to the newest Giver:

**GIVER F:** A shmoo.

**RECEIVER:** OH! A shmoo!

Receiver becomes Giver G and continues the pattern.

**THE AARDVARK**

The game is played to the right in exactly the same way as to the left, but the object passed around is referred to as an “Aardvark.”

Because the class is sitting in a circle, eventually the lines of the Aardvark and the Shmoo will overlap. There will be confusion, but eventually both objects will come back to the original Giver. When the object comes to Giver A, she will ask “A What?” and then end up giving herself the answer at the end when the question “A What?” comes back around to her.

**TIPS**

- Encourage students to play this game “in-role.” Ask them to act as much as possible as if they forgot what the object was and need to ask the person next to them “A what?”
- It may be necessary to slow down and/or replay the moment when the Shmoo and Aardvark overlap.
- You may find that you, as the initial Giver, can have fun investing emotional intent behind the game to role model characterisation. Alternate randomly between frustration and calm when telling everybody that the object is “a shmoo.”
- Instruct students to actually turn their heads and make eye contact with whomever they are speaking to. This makes the communication and the passing of the game far easier.
- Every so often it may be necessary to restart the game. Encourage students that they can do this. Sometimes it is helpful to sit directly across from two very focused students, so that they begin the overlap of the shmoo and aardvark.