



# AWAKENING OF THE VOICE

These activities aim to prepare for speaking and make the shyest people at ease. They can be done one after the other or independently.

## ① Apple picking

Stand in a circle with enough space between the participants. They do not have anything to do in particular. They just stand with their feet apart. They breathe in through their nose and out through their mouth. Repeat this breathing for several minutes. Then, invite people to warm up all parts of the body: the upper head, the neck, the shoulders, the arms, the stomach, the thighs, the legs, the calves and the feet. Each person at their own pace. Suggest the participants to make noise. What's important is that they make sounds freely, without having to worry about others, feeling free to let their bodies, their pains, the pleasure of relaxed muscles be heard. After a few minutes, encourage the participants to make more and more noise. At the end of the exercise, everyone has to stretch as if they wanted to pick large red apples hanging from the ceiling. Then, shake the upper part of your body rapidly and freely from the waist up with your arms and hands relaxed and hanging in the air. Stay in this position for 1 to 2 minutes.

## ① Stimulating the diaphragm

Stand in a circle. Suggest that they all make these different sounds together, to stimulate the diaphragm:

- Imitating a locomotive: *choo choo choo*
- Blowing out a candle with a short breath
- Chasing a cat: *pschitt !*
- Saying shush several times in a row: *shush shush shush shush shush*
- Laughing: *Ah ah ah ah ah*
- Panting of the puppy

### ③ Guided by sound

Pair up. A person “A” will be “guided” and “B” will be the “guide”. “B” chooses a sound to guide “A” through the space. “B” moves around while repeating the same sound. “A” tries to follow the sound with their eyes closed. “B” tries some variations in their voice: they make the sound by whispering, shouting, standing close to “A”, then further away to “A”. But “B” has to take care of “A” above all, and to make sure that the journey is safe. Let the pairs experiment for three minutes. Then, switch roles. Do a quick review: How did you feel? Was the exercise difficult? Were you more at ease as a “guide” or as a “guided” person? What kind of noise was safer for you to move with your eyes closed?

### ④ Rhythm box

Pair up. Teach everyone how to say “1, 2, 3” in the host country’s language or in any other language that may not be common. Then, ask them to count on a loop in this language, but alternating: the A person says “1”, B says “2”, then A says “3”, B says “1” and so on.

In a second phase, “1” can be replaced by a gesture and a sound, while 2 and 3 remain unchanged. The pair thus counts on a loop and alternately, replacing the number 1. In the second and third steps, the numbers 2 and 3 are changed too. When the different choreographies are mastered, share them with the group.

### ⑤ Theatrical walk

Tell the participants to walk around the room. Ask them to think of a simple gesture they did that very morning. While still walking, they now have to mime this gesture, without stopping. Invite them to play with this gesture: they can exaggerate the movement, make it as small as possible, etc. The participants can then add a sound. Then, they can imitate the gestures of other people. To conclude, try all together to do the same gesture.

### ⑥ Animal cries

Each participant receives a card with the name of an animal. This must be kept secret. In the group, the same animal is represented by three participants. They have to find each other by their cry at the trainer’s signal.

## ⑦ Orchestra

Each participant is an instrument and will create a sound with their body. Each person will be part of an orchestra, suggesting a sound and a rhythm that they will keep during the whole exercise. The participants are placed in several arcs, one behind the other. They stand in between so that everyone is visible to the conductor (this will be the trainer for the moment). The first person makes a sound, then another and so on. The trainer acts as a conductor:

- when they raise their hands, sounds intensify.
- when they lower their hands, sounds become less and less loud.
- when they make a sign to a person as if they were throwing something at them, the person plays their sound in a loop.
- when they make a sign to a person as if they were taking something back, the person stops playing.

At the end, ask people to take the facilitator's place as a conductor.

Variation: the facilitator sets a scene (e.g. the forest) in which each participant will have to reproduce a sound from nature (animal, wind, water...).