

Exploding Telephone Whisper Explained

Stand in a circle.

We are going to pass a sound and a gesture around the circle.

It's a secret you are telling the person next to you.

They pass it on to the person next to them.

As with all secrets it gets bigger with each re-telling so make it slightly bigger physically and more elaborate vocally.

It travels around the circle - starting tiny and getting bigger and bigger and bigger - until the last person LITERALLY EXPLODES!!!!!!! And everyone falls down dead using the words as their death rattle.

Start a really small and simple sound and gesture and encourage everyone to make it bigger.

'Bigger!' 'More!' 'Good!' 'Build the physicality' 'Make the sound more elaborate'

Until it gets back to you and then you have to top the person next to you - go nuts, they will love you for it!

Extract short phrases from your play and put them on a tablet, or print them on paper, and hold it up so that everyone can read it. You can deliver the words as a 'call and response' to help your students if they need it.

Change where you start in the circle so that everyone gets to experience different parts of the 'build'.

This exercise gives people a fun chance to expressively play with an approachable amount of language and explore the notion of 'building' or 'topping' the previous speaker – they are practicing acting skills.

Why 'Telephone' whisper?

I used to call it 'Chinese' whisper, but that's racist. So when I heard there was an alternative name for 'Chinese Whisper' of 'Telephone' I changed the name. And exploding things are much more fun!