

Diamond Exercise for Chorus Work

The idea of this exercise is to encourage students to work together to move as one, using their peripheral vision and awareness of each other in the space to move as a collective, or a chorus.

This serves as a great warm up before working on chorus scenes, because it encourages students to think about performing “as one” and mirroring each other’s movements. They also learn to pick up the rhythm of each other, which is really important in performance, especially when working in unison as a chorus.

As students become familiar with the exercise, they should look like a shoal of fish, or birds flocking. It’s difficult to master, but when you do it looks fantastic. If you can’t tell who is leading the group, then this is a job well done.

We often use this technique on stage in our shows to give the chorus an animalistic, physical feel which really translates well.

- Split students in to groups of 3 or 4 (each group performs to the rest of the class)
- Place students in a diamond shape (the student at the front is the “nose”)
- Ask the student at the “nose” to move forward with a gesture or movement
- Ask the other students to move with the “nose”, copying the gesture
- The “nose” can give the movement to someone else by turning to their left/right
- The new “nose” then moves forward with a different movement
- Repeat the exercise until students are confident with the process
- After each group has performed, discuss with the students who are watching the diamond, asking questions such as:
 - * What movements worked particularly well?
 - * Do they evoke a story?
 - * What was difficult about the exercise?
 - * Imagine that you are directing Antigone - How might you use this exercise on the stage to create movement for the Greek chorus?

NB: Introducing text in to the exercise is a really good way of evoking movement - Ask one student to read from an extract of text (we recommend text 5 - Chorus Love) whilst the diamond of students respond to it. You could ask the diamond to respond to powerful themes such as “army” or “family”, to see how this affects their movement.

Useful Links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKd9ERhV5SI>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0leUlr9H_M
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6anj5T_I5k