

Talk a Lot

Politics

Role Plays

1. “Can I rely on your vote on Thursday?”

Place: Your front doorstep
Time: 8.18 pm
Characters: You and three candidates in a general election (played by the same student)
Situation: You’ve just got home from a busy day at work, made tea for your family, and now you’re relaxing watching an important football match. The doorbell rings

Scenes: i) The first candidate – from a right-wing party – tells you about their policies. You try to get rid of them so that you can watch the rest of the match
ii) Half an hour later another candidate rings the doorbell. This time they are from a left-wing party. They absolutely insist on explaining their policies...
iii) Twenty minutes later a third candidate turns up. This time they’re from a radical single-issue party. You try your best to get them to leave, but they are really quite determined to convert you to their cause...

If there are three people in the group, the third character could be:

- a) A member of your family who hates both football and politics
- b) A nosy neighbour, who is also standing as a candidate in the election

2. “Me!” “Me!”

Place: Stone Age Britain
Time: 12,400 BC (9.05 am)
Characters: You are a caveman – the strongest caveman in your camp. The other student is your rival for power. (*Note: because language has yet to develop, the only word that you know is “Me!” No other words are allowed during the role play, although you can say “Me!” in many different ways*)
Situation: You are roaming a grassy plain hunting for food for your family

Scenes: i) You discover the carcass of a huge giraffe. Your rival comes along and tries to steal the carcass. You fight to see who is the strongest. Unfortunately, your rival finds a hefty wooden club, and employs it to beat you over the head repeatedly, until you hand over the giraffe carcass
ii) The next day, while out hunting and gathering, you clash again over food. But this time you have the superior weapon – a sabre-toothed tiger! Your rival is very afraid and runs away, pursued by the tiger
iii) A few months later, the whole camp is starving. While looking for food you both find an enormous woolly mammoth carcass at the same time. Neither of you can move it on your own. You need each other to get it back to the camp. Do you fight for supremacy, or work together for the common good?

If there are three people in the group, the third character could be:

- a) The dead giraffe, then the sabre-toothed tiger, then the woolly mammoth carcass
- b) A cavewoman and mother, who tries to bring peace between the warring rivals

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Role Play Extensions

Here are some additional situations for students to use as starting points for new role plays based on the topic of "Politics":



Politics

1. You are butler to the king in a country which has had a monarchy for over 1,000 years. One day there is a revolution and the people take over. They decide to get rid of the monarchy. The revolutionaries order you to inform the king that he is no longer required. You don't want to do this, because you have been a loyal servant to the royal family for nearly fifty years, but the alternative is to be thrown into prison – or worse! First you try to be tactful and break the news gently. When the king refuses to accept it, you have to be more persuasive. Finally, when the king declares that he will never leave his position, you have to take more drastic action to get rid of him – before the revolutionaries come looking for you...

2. You work for the navy on board a submarine. The crew is organised in a very democratic way, with everybody able to take part in the decision-making process via a committee. One day there is an emergency and your submarine starts to sink. The committee meets to decide what action to take. The problem is that nobody can agree what to do, and everybody comes up with a different response to the crisis. The rules of the committee state clearly that there must be a majority in agreement before action can be taken. As discussion and debate continue, the submarine sinks slowly to the ocean floor. Will your committee be able to agree what to do before the oxygen runs out?

